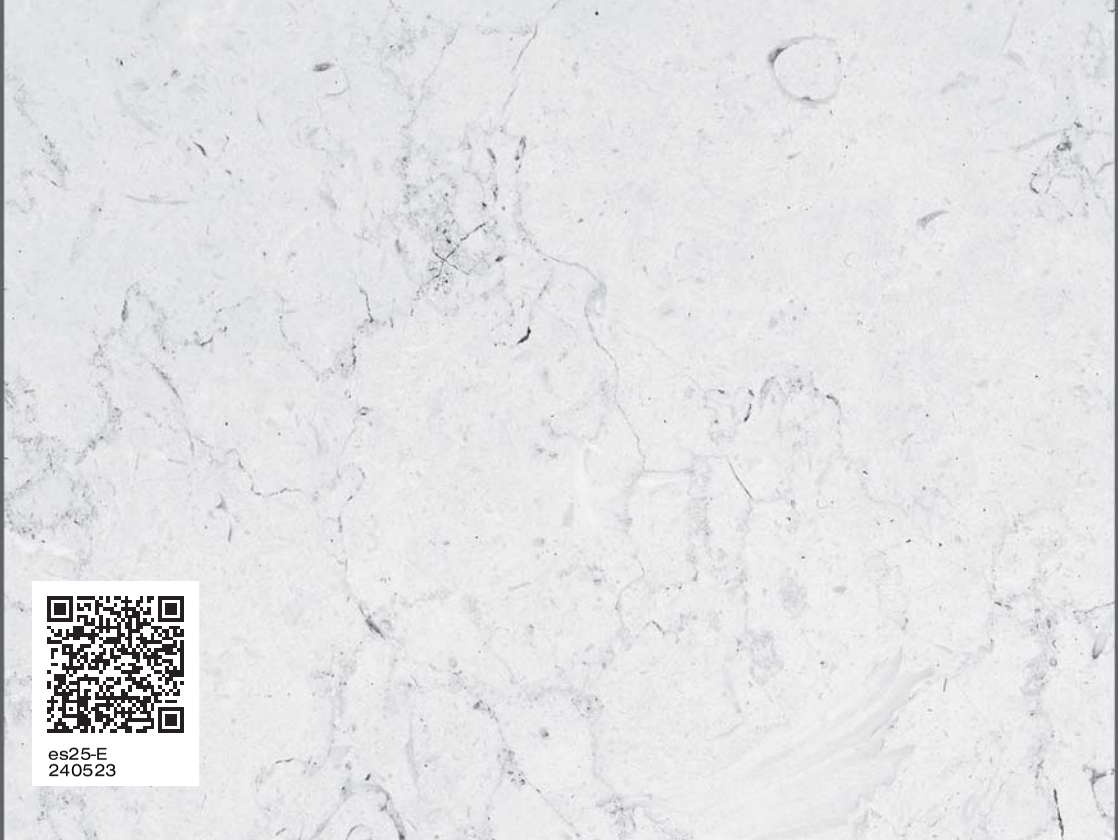
# *Examining the Scriptures Daily*

# 2025



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# *Examining the Scriptures Daily*

# 2025

**Yeartext**

**“Give Jehovah the glory due his name.”**

**—Psalm 96:8.**

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Name

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# 2025

### JANUARY

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### DECEMBER

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# Our Christian Life and Ministry
# Bible Reading Schedule for 2025

## January

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Psalms 127-134 | ☐ |
| 13 | Psalms 135-137 | ☐ |
| 20 | Psalms 138-139 | ☐ |
| 27 | Psalms 140-143 | ☐ |

## February

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Psalms 144-146 | ☐ |
| 10 | Psalms 147-150 | ☐ |
| 17 | Proverbs 1 | ☐ |
| 24 | Proverbs 2 | ☐ |

## March

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Proverbs 3 | ☐ |
| 10 | Proverbs 4 | ☐ |
| 17 | Proverbs 5 | ☐ |
| 24 | Proverbs 6 | ☐ |
| 31 | Proverbs 7 | ☐ |

## April

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | Proverbs 8 | ☐ |
| 14 | Proverbs 9 | ☐ |
| 21 | Proverbs 10 | ☐ |
| 28 | Proverbs 11 | ☐ |

## May

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Proverbs 12 | ☐ |
| 12 | Proverbs 13 | ☐ |
| 19 | Proverbs 14 | ☐ |
| 26 | Proverbs 15 | ☐ |

## June

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Proverbs 16 | ☐ |
| 9 | Proverbs 17 | ☐ |
| 16 | Proverbs 18 | ☐ |
| 23 | Proverbs 19 | ☐ |
| 30 | Proverbs 20 | ☐ |

| July | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | Proverbs 21 | ☐ |
| 14 | Proverbs 22 | ☐ |
| 21 | Proverbs 23 | ☐ |
| 28 | Proverbs 24 | ☐ |

| August | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | Proverbs 25 | ☐ |
| 11 | Proverbs 26 | ☐ |
| 18 | Proverbs 27 | ☐ |
| 25 | Proverbs 28 | ☐ |

| September | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Proverbs 29 | ☐ |
| 8 | Proverbs 30 | ☐ |
| 15 | Proverbs 31 | ☐ |
| 22 | Ecclesiastes 1-2 | ☐ |
| 29 | Ecclesiastes 3-4 | ☐ |

| October | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Ecclesiastes 5-6 | ☐ |
| 13 | Ecclesiastes 7-8 | ☐ |
| 20 | Ecclesiastes 9-10 | ☐ |
| 27 | Ecclesiastes 11-12 | ☐ |

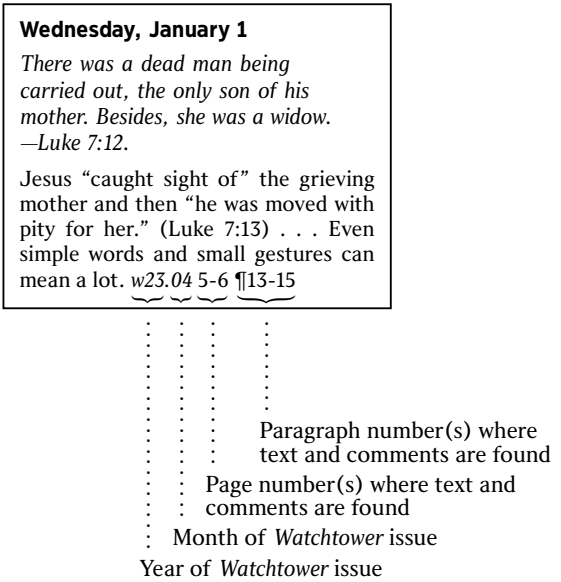
| November | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Song of Solomon 1-2 | ☐ |
| 10 | Song of Solomon 3-5 | ☐ |
| 17 | Song of Solomon 6-8 | ☐ |
| 24 | Isaiah 1-2 | ☐ |

| December | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Isaiah 3-5 | ☐ |
| 8 | Isaiah 6-8 | ☐ |
| 15 | Isaiah 9-10 | ☐ |
| 22 | Isaiah 11-13 | ☐ |
| 29 | Isaiah 14-16 | ☐ |

# How to Use This Booklet

In this booklet, you will find a scripture and comments for each day. Although the text and comments may be read at any time, many find it advantageous to consider them in the morning. Then they can reflect on such thoughts throughout the day. Discussing the text as a family is most beneficial. Bethel families around the world do so at breakfast time.

The comments are taken from the *Watchtower* (*w*) issues of April 2023 through March 2024. Figures following the date of the *Watchtower* issue refer first to the page(s) in that issue and then to the paragraph(s) where the material is found. (See illustration below.) Additional information on the subject matter can be found in the article itself.


**Wednesday, January 1**
*There was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother. Besides, she was a widow.* —*Luke 7:12.*
Jesus "caught sight of" the grieving mother and then "he was moved with pity for her." (Luke 7:13) . . . Even simple words and small gestures can mean a lot. *w23.04* 5-6 ¶13-15
Paragraph number(s) where text and comments are found
Page number(s) where text and comments are found
Month of *Watchtower* issue
Year of *Watchtower* issue

**Wednesday, January 1**

*There was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother. Besides, she was a widow. —Luke 7:12.*

Jesus "caught sight of" the grieving mother and then "he was moved with pity for her." (Luke 7:13) But Jesus did not just feel pity for the mother; he showed his compassion for her. He spoke to her, no doubt with a reassuring tone, and said: "Stop weeping." Then he took the initiative to do something. He brought her son back to life and "gave him to his mother." (Luke 7:14, 15) What can we learn from Jesus' miracle of resurrecting the widow's son? We learn a lesson in showing compassion to those who grieve. Like Jesus, we can cultivate compassion for bereaved ones by being observant. We can take the initiative to show compassion by saying and doing what we can to help them and comfort them. (Prov. 17:17; 2 Cor. 1:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:8) Even simple words and small gestures can mean a lot. *w23.04* 5-6 ¶13-15

**Thursday, January 2**

*This sickness is not meant to end in death, but is for the glory of God. —John 11:4.*

Even though Jesus knows that his friend Lazarus has just died, he remains where he is for two more days and then he makes the trip to Bethany. So by the time Jesus arrives, Lazarus has been dead for four days. Jesus intends to do something that will benefit his friends and glorify God. (John 11:6, 11, 17) We learn a lesson about friendship from this account. Consider: When Mary and Martha sent the message to Jesus, they did not ask him to come to Bethany. They simply said that his dear friend was sick. (John 11:3) When Lazarus died, Jesus could have resurrected him from a distance. Yet, Jesus chose to go to Bethany to be with his friends Mary and Martha. Do you have a friend who will come to your aid without being asked? Then you know that you can count on him for help in "times of distress." (Prov. 17:17) Like Jesus, may we be such a friend to others! *w23.04* 10 ¶10-11

**Friday, January 3**

*The one who promised is faithful. —Heb. 10:23.*

When undergoing a trial, we may feel that Jehovah's new world will never come. Does this mean that our faith is weak? Not necessarily. Consider an illustration. In the middle of a brutally cold winter, we may feel that summer will never come. And yet summer does come. Likewise, when we are deeply discouraged, we might feel that the new world will never come. If our faith is strong, though, we know that God's promises will be fulfilled. (Ps. 94:3, 14, 15; Heb. 6:17-19) With that confidence, we can continue putting our worship of Jehovah first in our life. Consider one more area in which strong faith is required—the preaching work. Many people feel that the "good news" about God's coming new world is too good to be true. (Matt. 24:14; Ezek. 33:32) Never allow their skeptical attitude to rub off on us. To prevent that from happening, we must keep strengthening our faith. *w23.04* 27 ¶6-7; 28 ¶14

**Saturday, January 4**

*We know that we are to have the things we ask for, since we have asked them of him.—1 John 5:15.*

Have you ever wondered whether Jehovah is answering your prayers? If so, you are not alone. A number of brothers and sisters have voiced this concern, especially when going through a difficult time. If we are suffering, we too may find it harder to discern how Jehovah is answering our prayers. Why can we be confident that Jehovah answers the prayers of his worshippers? The Scriptures assure us that Jehovah loves us deeply and that we are precious to him. (Hag. 2:7; 1 John 4:10) That is why he invites us to ask for his help in prayer. (1 Pet. 5:6, 7) He wants to help us to stay close to him and to deal successfully with the difficulties we are facing. In the Bible, we often read that Jehovah answered the prayers of his worshippers. Can you think of an example? *w23.05* 8 ¶1-4

**Sunday, January 5**

*Mary said: "My soul magnifies Jehovah."—Luke 1:46.*

Mary had her own relationship with Jehovah; her faith did not depend on what Joseph did. She knew the Scriptures well. She also made time for meditation. (Luke 2:19, 51) No doubt, Mary's spirituality made her an excellent wife. Today, many wives strive to do as Mary did. For example, a sister named Emiko says: "When I was single, I had my personal spiritual routine. But after getting married, I realized that because my husband prayed for us and took the lead in worship, my faith had become dependent on what he did. I came to see that I needed to carry my own load regarding my relationship with Jehovah. So now I set aside time to be alone with my God—praying, reading the Scriptures, and meditating on his thoughts." (Gal. 6:5) Wives, as you continue strengthening your friendship with Jehovah, your husband will have even more reason to praise you and love you.—Prov. 31:30. *w23.05* 22 ¶6

**Monday, January 6**

*I will teach you the fear of Jehovah. —Ps. 34:11.*

We are not born with a fear of Jehovah; we must cultivate it. One way we can do that is by examining creation. The more we see God's wisdom, his power, and his deep love for us as expressed in "the things made," the deeper our respect and love for him will be. (Rom. 1:20) Another way we can develop our fear of God is by praying regularly. The more we pray, the more real Jehovah becomes to us. Each time we ask him for strength to endure a trial, we are reminded of his awesome power. When we thank him for the gift of his Son, we remind ourselves of Jehovah's love for us. And when we supplicate Jehovah for his help with a problem, we impress on our heart just how wise he is. Such prayers deepen our respect for Jehovah. And they strengthen our resolve to avoid doing anything that would damage our friendship with him. *w23.06* 15 ¶6-7

**Tuesday, January 7**

*Jehovah is our Lawgiver.*
*—Isa. 33:22.*

Jehovah has consistently conveyed clear laws to his people. For example, the first-century governing body identified three ways in which Christians must remain firm: (1) by rejecting idolatry, worshipping only Jehovah, (2) by respecting the sanctity of blood, and (3) by adhering to the Bible's high moral standards. (Acts 15:28, 29) How can Christians today maintain a firm stand in these three specific ways? By worshipping and obeying Jehovah. He commanded the Israelites to give him exclusive devotion. (Deut. 5:6-10) And when tempted by the Devil, Jesus clearly indicated that we must worship only Jehovah. (Matt. 4:8-10) Therefore, we do not worship religious idols. We also do not idolize humans —whether they are religious leaders, political rulers, or stars in the world of sports and entertainment—treating them like gods. We worship only the one who "created all things."—Rev. 4: 11. *w23.07* 14-15 ¶3-4

**Wednesday, January 8**

*By fearing Jehovah one turns away from bad.—Prov. 16:6.*

Satan's world is obsessed with immoral sex and pornography. (Eph. 4: 19) So we must cultivate godly fear and turn away from bad. In Proverbs chapter 9, we read about wisdom and foolishness, personified as two women. Each is described as extending an invitation to the inexperienced—those "lacking good sense." Each says, as it were, 'Come into my house and have a meal.' (Prov. 9:1, 4-6) But there is a vast difference in the results, or outcomes, presented. Consider the invitation from the "stupid woman." (Prov. 9:13-18) She boldly calls out to those lacking good sense, "Come in here" and feast. With what result? "Those powerless in death are there." We are warned about "the wayward" and "immoral woman." We are told: "Her house sinks down into death." (Prov. 2:11-19) Proverbs 5: 3-10 contains an alert about another "wayward woman" whose "feet descend into death." *w23.06* 21-22 ¶6-7

**Thursday, January 9**

*Let your reasonableness become known to all men.—Phil. 4:5.*

Elders must set a good example in being reasonable. (1 Tim. 3:2, 3) For instance, an elder should not expect that his opinions will always be accepted simply because he is older than the other elders. He realizes that Jehovah's spirit can move any member of the body to make an expression that contributes to a wise decision. And if no Bible principle is violated, reasonable elders willingly support the decision of the majority on the body, even if they had preferred a different decision. Christians reap many blessings by being reasonable. We enjoy better relationships with our brothers and sisters, and the congregation enjoys peace. We find delight in the beautiful variety of personalities and customs among Jehovah's united worshippers. Above all, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we are imitating our reasonable God, Jehovah. *w23.07* 25 ¶16-17

**Friday, January 10**

*Those having insight will understand. —Dan. 12:10.*

Daniel approached prophecy with the right motive, to know the truth. Daniel was also humble, recognizing that Jehovah will give understanding to those who know him and who live by his clean standards. (Dan. 2:27, 28) Daniel proved that he was humble by relying on Jehovah for help. (Dan. 2: 18) Daniel was also thorough. He researched the inspired Scriptures that were available to him. (Jer. 25:11, 12; Dan. 9:2) How can you imitate Daniel? Examine your motives. Is your study of Bible prophecy motivated by a strong desire to know the truth? If it is, Jehovah will help you. (John 4: 23, 24; 14:16, 17) Some may do so in hopes of finding evidence that the Bible is not inspired by God. In that way, they feel that they can justify setting their own standards of right and wrong and living by those standards. However, we need to have the proper motivation. *w23.08* 9 ¶7-8

**Saturday, January 11**

*If you become discouraged . . . , your strength will be meager. —Prov. 24:10.*

We can burden ourselves with unrealistic expectations when we compare ourselves with others. (Gal. 6:4) If we do so, we could become envious and competitive. (Gal. 5:26) In an effort to accomplish what others have achieved, we may push ourselves beyond what our abilities and circumstances reasonably permit. And if "expectation postponed makes the heart sick," how much more disheartening it is to set expectations that we can never meet! (Prov. 13:12) Doing so can sap our strength and slow us down in our race for life. Do not expect more of yourself than what Jehovah requires. He never expects you to give what you do not have. (2 Cor. 8: 12) Be assured that Jehovah does not compare what you do with what others do. (Matt. 25:20-23) He treasures your whole-souled service, your faithfulness, and your endurance. *w23.08* 29 ¶10-11

**Sunday, January 12**

*Am I to die of thirst?—Judg. 15:18.*

Jehovah answered Samson's cry for help by miraculously creating a source of water. When Samson drank from it, "his strength returned and he revived." (Judg. 15:19, ftn.) Apparently, this new water source still existed years later when the prophet Samuel was inspired to write the book of Judges. The Israelites who saw that flowing water may have been reminded that Jehovah can be relied on to help his faithful worshippers in their time of need. We too need to look to Jehovah for help no matter what talents or abilities we may have or what we have accomplished in his service. We should modestly accept the fact that true success is possible only when we rely on Jehovah. Just as Samson was energized when he drank the water that Jehovah provided, we will be spiritually strengthened when we take advantage of all the provisions Jehovah makes available to us. —Matt. 11:28. *w23.09* 4 ¶8-10

**Monday, January 13**

*A mild answer turns away rage, but a harsh word stirs up anger. —Prov. 15:1.*

What can we do when we are facing a tense situation, such as when someone slanders the name of our God or ridicules the Bible? We should ask Jehovah for his spirit and for his wisdom to respond in a mild way. What if we later realize that we did not respond as well as we should have? We can pray again about the matter and think of how we can do better the next time. In turn, Jehovah will grant us his holy spirit so that we can control our temper and show mildness. Some Bible verses can help us to control our speech when confronted with difficult situations. God's spirit can bring those texts to mind. (John 14:26) For example, the principles we find in the book of Proverbs can help us to be mild. (Prov. 15:18) That Bible book also reveals the benefits of showing restraint in tense situations.—Prov. 10:19; 17: 27; 21:23; 25:15. *w23.09* 15 ¶6-7

**Tuesday, January 14**

*I intend always to remind you of these things.—2 Pet. 1:12.*

The apostle Peter knew his life would soon end. During his decades of faithful service, he walked with Jesus, opened up new fields for preaching, and served as a member of the governing body. But Peter's service was not over. In about 62-64 C.E., he was inspired to write two letters—the Bible books of 1 and 2 Peter. (2 Pet. 1:13-15) Peter composed his inspired letters at a time when his fellow believers were "distressed by various trials." (1 Pet. 1:6) Wicked men were trying to introduce false teachings and unclean conduct into the congregation. (2 Pet. 2:1, 2, 14) Christians living in Jerusalem would soon face "the end of all things"—the destruction of that city and of the Jewish systems of things by Roman armies. (1 Pet. 4:7) No doubt Peter's letters helped Christians to see what they could do to endure present trials and to prepare for future trials. *w23.09* 26 ¶1-2

**Wednesday, January 15**

[*Christ*] *learned obedience from the things he suffered.—Heb. 5:8.*

Like Jesus, we often learn obedience under challenging circumstances. For example, during the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic when we were asked to stop meeting at our Kingdom Halls and to suspend our house-to-house ministry, did you struggle to obey? Yet, your obedience protected you, united you with fellow believers, and pleased Jehovah. All of us are now better prepared to obey any instructions we receive during the great tribulation. Our lives may depend on it! (Job 36:11) We choose to obey Jehovah primarily because we love him and we want to please him. (1 John 5:3) We can never repay Jehovah for all that he has done for us. (Ps. 116: 12) But we can obey him and those who have authority over us. If we obey, we show that we are wise. And the wise make Jehovah's heart rejoice.—Prov. 27:11. *w23.10* 11 ¶18-19

**Thursday, January 16**

*Worship the One who made the heaven and the earth.—Rev. 14:7.*

If an angel were to speak to you, would you listen to what he had to say? Well, today, an angel is speaking "to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." What is he saying? "Fear God and give him glory . . . Worship the One who made the heaven and the earth." (Rev. 14:6, 7) Jehovah is the only true God whom everyone should worship. How thankful we can be that he has given us the precious opportunity to worship him in his great spiritual temple! What exactly is the spiritual temple, and where can we find the details that explain it? The spiritual temple is not a literal building. It is Jehovah's arrangement for offering acceptable worship based on Jesus' ransom sacrifice. The apostle Paul explained this arrangement in the letter that he wrote to the first-century Hebrew Christians living in Judea. *w23.10* 24 ¶1-2

**Friday, January 17**

*"Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit," says Jehovah.—Zech. 4:6.*

In 522 B.C.E., the enemies of the Jews succeeded in having a ban placed on the rebuilding of Jehovah's temple. But Zechariah assured the Jews that Jehovah would use His powerful spirit to remove any obstacles. In 520 B.C.E., King Darius lifted the ban on the temple work and even provided the Jews with funds and official support. (Ezra 6:1, 6-10) Jehovah promised his people that they would have his backing if they gave priority to the rebuilding of the temple. (Hag. 1:8, 13, 14; Zech. 1:3, 16) Encouraged by the prophets, the repatriated Jews resumed the temple work in 520 B.C.E. and finished rebuilding it in less than five years. Because the Jews gave priority to doing God's will despite uncertainties, they received Jehovah's support. As a result, they worshipped Jehovah with joy.—Ezra 6:14-16, 22. *w23.11* 15 ¶6-7

**Saturday, January 18**

*Walk orderly in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had. —Rom. 4:12.*

Although many people have heard of Abraham, most know little about him. However, you know a lot about Abraham. You know, for example, that Abraham has been called "the father of all those having faith." (Rom. 4:11) You may wonder, though, 'Can I walk in the footsteps of Abraham and have the kind of faith he had?' Yes, you can. One way we can develop faith like that of Abraham is by studying his example. At God's command, Abraham moved to a distant land, lived in tents for decades, and attempted to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. Those actions reflected strong faith. Abraham's faith and works resulted in his having God's approval and friendship. (Jas. 2:22, 23) Jehovah wants us —wants you—to enjoy those same blessings. For that reason, he inspired the Bible writers Paul and James to refer to Abraham's example. *w23.12* 2 ¶1-2

**Sunday, January 19**

*Everyone must be quick to listen, slow to speak.—Jas. 1:19.*

Sisters, develop good communication skills. Christians need to communicate effectively. In this regard, the disciple James provides practical counsel for us, saying the words above. When you listen carefully as others speak, you show empathy, or "fellow feeling," for them. (1 Pet. 3:8) If you are not sure that you understand what a person is saying or how he feels, ask appropriate questions. Then take a moment to think before you speak. (Prov. 15:28, ftn.) Ask yourself: 'Is what I am about to say true and upbuilding? Is it tactful and kind?' Learn from mature sisters who are good communicators. (Prov. 31:26) Pay attention to the way they speak. The better you learn this skill, the better your relationships with others will be. *w23.12* 21 ¶12

**Monday, January 20**

*Whoever isolates himself . . . rejects all practical wisdom.—Prov. 18:1.*

Today, Jehovah may use family, friends, or the elders to support us. However, when we are hurt, we may be inclined to withdraw. We just want to be left alone. That is a normal reaction. What can we do to receive Jehovah's support? Fight the urge to isolate yourself. When we isolate ourselves, our focus often narrows, and we begin to think only about ourselves and the problems we are going through. This type of thinking can affect the decisions we make. Of course, we all need moments to be alone, especially when confronted with tragic situations. However, if we were to isolate ourselves for an extended period, we could push away the very means that Jehovah is using to support us. So welcome the help of your family, friends, and elders. View them for what they are—Jehovah's means of supporting you.—Prov. 17:17; Isa. 32: 1, 2. *w24.01* 24 ¶12-13

**Tuesday, January 21**

*No razor should pass over his head. —Num. 6:5.*

Nazirites vowed not to cut their hair. That was a way to show their complete submission to Jehovah. Sadly, there were times in Israel's history when Nazirites were not appreciated or supported. At times, it must have taken real courage for a Nazirite to stick to his vow and stand out as different. (Amos 2:12) Because we choose to submit to Jehovah's will, we too stand out as different from the people around us. We need courage to identify ourselves as Jehovah's Witnesses at work or at school. And as this world's attitudes and conduct go from bad to worse, we will likely find it more difficult to live according to Bible principles and share the good news with others. (2 Tim. 1:8; 3:13) Always remember, though, that we "make [Jehovah's] heart rejoice" when we courageously stand out as different from those who do not serve him.—Prov. 27:11; Mal. 3:18. *w24.02* 16 ¶7; 17 ¶9

**Wednesday, January 22**

*Welcome one another.*
*—Rom. 15:7.*

Consider the diversity of the congregation in Rome. Among them were not only Jews, who were raised to obey the Mosaic Law, but also Gentiles, whose background was totally different. Some Christians were likely slaves while others were freemen—perhaps some were even slave owners. How could those Christians overcome such differences and strengthen their love? The apostle Paul urged them to "welcome one another." What did he mean? The word translated "welcome" means to receive someone kindly or hospitably, such as into one's home or circle of friends. For example, Paul told Philemon how to welcome the runaway slave Onesimus: "Receive him kindly." (Philem. 17) And Priscilla and Aquila welcomed Apollos, who knew less about Christianity than they did, by taking "him into their company." (Acts 18:26) Rather than allow their diversity to divide them, those Christians overcame their differences and welcomed one another. *w23.07* 6 ¶13

**Thursday, January 23**

*I will pay my vows to Jehovah.*
*—Ps. 116:14.*

The main reason you dedicate yourself to Jehovah is that you love him. Your love is not based on emotion alone. Rather, it is rooted in "accurate knowledge" and "spiritual comprehension"—the things that you learned about Jehovah that caused your love for him to grow. (Col. 1:9) Your study of the Scriptures has convinced you (1) that Jehovah is real, (2) that the Bible is his inspired Word, and (3) that he uses his organization to accomplish his will. Those who dedicate themselves to Jehovah should know the basic teachings found in God's Word and be living in harmony with its standards. They share their faith with others to the extent that their circumstances allow. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Their love for Jehovah has grown, and their heartfelt desire is to give him exclusive devotion. Is that not so of you? *w24.03* 4-5 ¶6-8

**Friday, January 24**

*They will become one flesh.*
*—Gen. 2:24.*

Abigail was married to Nabal, who the Bible says was harsh and behaved badly. (1 Sam. 25:3) It must have been difficult for Abigail to live with such a man. Could Abigail have found an easy way out of her marriage? She was given that opportunity when David, Israel's future king, came to kill her husband for insulting him and his men. (1 Sam. 25:9-13) Abigail could have fled, allowing David to carry out his plan. Yet, she intervened and convinced David to let Nabal live. (1 Sam. 25:23-27) What could have motivated her? Abigail loved Jehovah and respected his standards for marriage. She knew that Jehovah viewed marriage as a sacred arrangement. She wanted to please God, and that would have motivated her to do whatever she could to save her household, including her husband. She acted quickly to prevent David from murdering Nabal. *w24.03* 16-17 ¶9-10

**Saturday, January 25**

*I would strengthen you with the words of my mouth.—Job 16:5.*

Are there some in your congregation who are trying to simplify their life in order to have a greater share in theocratic activities? Do you know young ones who are bravely standing out as different from others in school, even though it is difficult for them to do so? What about those who may be struggling to remain faithful because of family opposition? Let us seize every opportunity to speak reassuringly to such dear fellow worshippers, expressing our appreciation for their self-sacrificing spirit and courage. (Philem. 4, 5, 7) Jehovah is confident that we sincerely desire to please him and that we are willing to make sacrifices to live up to our dedication vow. He dignifies us by letting us express our love for him in a personal way. (Prov. 23:15, 16) May we, then, be determined to continue serving Jehovah, willingly offering him our very best. *w24.02* 18 ¶14; 19 ¶16

**Sunday, January 26**

*He went through the land doing good and healing.—Acts 10:38.*

Picture the scene in late 29 C.E. at the start of Jesus' ministry. Jesus and his mother, Mary, are invited to a wedding feast in Cana. Mary is apparently helping to care for the guests. But during the wedding feast, a problem arises—the wine runs out. Mary quickly turns to her son and says: "They have no wine." (John 2:1-3) What does Jesus do? He miraculously turns water into "fine wine." (John 2:9, 10) Jesus would go on to perform many other miracles during his ministry. He used his miraculous power to help tens of thousands of people. For example, just two of his miracles—feeding 5,000 men and later 4,000 men—may have involved a total of over 27,000 people if we include the women and children who were also present. (Matt. 14:15-21; 15:32-38) On both occasions, Jesus also healed many who were sick.—Matt. 14:14; 15:30, 31. *w23.04* 2 ¶1-2

**Monday, January 27**

*I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, "Do not be afraid. I will help you."—Isa. 41:13.*

After a traumatic event, there may be days when we feel weak physically and emotionally. Like Elijah, we could feel that it is too hard to get up. We just want to sleep. (1 Ki. 19:5-7) We may need help to keep active in Jehovah's service. In those moments, Jehovah assures us of his help as expressed in the words of today's text. King David experienced this help. When faced with trials and enemies, he said to Jehovah: "Your right hand supports me." (Ps. 18:35) Jehovah often supports us by motivating others to help us. For example, once when David felt weak, his friend Jonathan visited him to provide emotional support and words of encouragement. (1 Sam. 23:16, 17) Similarly, Jehovah chose Elisha to provide practical help to Elijah. —1 Ki. 19:16, 21; 2 Ki. 2:2. *w24.01* 23-24 ¶10-12

**Tuesday, January 28**

*Jehovah himself gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and discernment.—Prov. 2:6.*

Jehovah is a generous, abundant Provider. These qualities are reflected in "true wisdom," personified in Proverbs chapter 9 as a woman. The account mentions that this figurative woman has fully prepared her meat, mixed her wine, and arranged her table in her house. (Prov. 9:2, ftn.) Further, according to verses 4 and 5: "She [personified wisdom] says to the one lacking good sense: 'Come, eat my bread.'" Why should we come to true wisdom's house and eat the meal she offers? Jehovah wants his children to be wise and safe. He does not want us to learn life's lessons the hard way —through bitter experience and with nagging regrets. That is why "he treasures up practical wisdom for the upright." (Prov. 2:7) When we have a healthy fear of Jehovah, we will want to please him. We hear his wise counsel, and we are happy to apply it. —Jas. 1:25. *w23.06* 23 ¶14-15

**Wednesday, January 29**

*God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work.—Heb. 6:10.*

Even if we feel limited in what we can do in God's service, we can rest assured that Jehovah appreciates our sincere efforts to please him. How do we know? In Zechariah's day, Jehovah asked his prophet to make a crown out of the gold and the silver sent by the exiles in Babylon. (Zech. 6:11) This "grand crown" would serve as a "reminder" of their generous contributions. (Zech. 6:14, ftns.) We can be confident that Jehovah will never forget our earnest efforts to serve him during uncertain times. We will no doubt continue to face uncertainties in these last days, and conditions may even get worse in the future. (2 Tim. 3:1, 13) However, we do not need to be consumed by anxiety. Remember Jehovah's words to his people in Haggai's day: "I am with you . . . Do not be afraid." (Hag. 2:4, 5) We too can be sure that Jehovah will be with us as long as we do our best to carry out his will. *w23.11* 19 ¶20-21

**Thursday, January 30**

*I am a sinful man.—Luke 5:8.*

The apostle Peter's shortcomings could easily have been omitted from the Bible record. However, they were included under inspiration as lessons for us. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Learning about this man who had weaknesses and feelings like ours can help us to see that Jehovah does not expect perfection from us. He wants us to persevere—to keep trying—despite our weaknesses. Why is it necessary for us to persevere? After we feel that we have overcome a certain weakness, we may suffer a setback. But we still keep working toward our goal. We all say or do things that we later regret; nonetheless, if we refuse to give up, Jehovah will help us to keep making progress. (1 Pet. 5:10) The compassion Jesus showed Peter despite his shortcomings can motivate us to continue serving Jehovah. *w23.09* 20-21 ¶2-3

**Friday, January 31**

*Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.* —*John 11:21.*

Jesus could have healed Lazarus, as Martha stated in today's text. But Jesus has in mind doing something even more remarkable. He promises: "Your brother will rise." He also says: "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:23, 25) Yes, he has God-given power over life and death. Earlier, he raised a young girl shortly after her death and he also raised a young man, apparently on the day the man died. (Luke 7:11-15; 8:49-55) But can he resurrect someone who has been dead for four days and whose body has begun to decay? Mary, Lazarus' other sister, goes out to meet Jesus. She repeats what her sister said: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (John 11:32) Seeing and hearing Mary and others with her weeping, Jesus is deeply saddened. Moved by tender compassion for his friends, he gives way to tears. He understands how painful it is when a loved one dies. Surely, he is eager to remove the cause of their tears! *w23.04* 10-11 ¶12-13

**Saturday, February 1**

*I will listen to you.*—*Jer. 29:12.*

When King Hezekiah was extremely sick, he begged Jehovah to help him recover. In response, Jehovah healed him. (2 Ki. 20:1-6) On the other hand, when the apostle Paul pleaded with Jehovah to remove his "thorn in the flesh," Jehovah did not remove the problem. (2 Cor. 12:7-9) The apostles James and Peter both faced death at the hands of King Herod. James was put to death, while Peter was miraculously rescued. (Acts 12:1-11) We may wonder, 'Why did Jehovah save Peter but not James?' The Bible does not say. What we can be sure of is that Jehovah's ways are "never unjust." (Deut. 32:4) At times, we may be faced with an outcome we did not expect. But because we trust that Jehovah's answer to our prayers will always be loving and just, we do not question the way he chooses to answer us.—Job 33:13. *w23.11* 21 ¶6

**Sunday, February 2**

*The wisdom from above is . . . ready to obey.*—*Jas. 3:17.*

The inspired writer James said that wise people are "ready to obey." Think of what that means. We should be eager and willing to obey those whom Jehovah has entrusted with a measure of authority. Of course, Jehovah does not expect us to obey someone who asks us to ignore His commands. (Acts 4:18-20) We may be more inclined to obey Jehovah than to obey a human. After all, Jehovah always gives perfect direction. (Ps. 19:7) That is hardly the case with humans who have authority. Even so, our heavenly Father has given a measure of authority to parents, government officials, and elders. (Prov. 6:20; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14) When we obey them, we are really obeying Jehovah. *w23.10* 6 ¶2-3

**Monday, February 3**

*These words are faithful and true. —Rev. 21:5.*

One way to strengthen our faith is by contemplating Jehovah's power. He has the power to fulfill everything he promises to do. He is, after all, Almighty God. (Job 42:2; Mark 10:27; Eph. 3:20) He assured Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son in their old age. (Gen. 17:15-17) He also told Abraham that his descendants would be given the land of Canaan. During the many years that Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt, it must have seemed as if that promise would never come true. But it did. He told Mary, a virgin, that she would give birth to his own Son, whose arrival Jehovah had promised thousands of years earlier in the garden of Eden—another promise fulfilled! (Gen. 3:15) We strengthen our faith in Jehovah's power to bring about the new world by reflecting on his record of making and fulfilling his promises.—Josh. 23:14; Isa. 55:10, 11. *w23.04* 28 ¶10-12

**Tuesday, February 4**

*O Jehovah, hear my prayer; listen to my plea for help.—Ps. 143:1.*

Jehovah answered David's prayers for deliverance. (1 Sam. 19:10, 18-20; 2 Sam. 5:17-25) We too can have that assurance. (Ps. 145:18) Jehovah may not answer our prayers in the way that we expect. Paul asked God to remove "a thorn in the flesh." On three occasions, Paul prayed specifically about this difficult problem. Did Jehovah answer those prayers? Yes, but not in the way that Paul had hoped. Instead of removing the problem, Jehovah gave him the power that he needed to keep serving Him faithfully. (2 Cor. 12:7-10) We too may at times receive an answer that differs from what we expect. We can be sure that Jehovah knows exactly how best to help us. He can even "do more than superabundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive." (Eph. 3:20) For that reason, his answer to our prayers could come at a time or in a way that we do not anticipate. *w23.05* 8-9 ¶4-6

**Wednesday, February 5**

*The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out.—John 5:28, 29.*

From time to time, we all do well to reflect on the Bible's promise of a future resurrection. Why? Because we never know when we might face a life-threatening illness or suddenly lose someone we love in death. (Eccl. 9:11; Jas. 4:13, 14) Our resurrection hope can help us endure such challenges. (1 Thess. 4:13) The Scriptures assure us that our heavenly Father knows us well and loves us dearly. (Luke 12:7) Think of how well Jehovah God must know us in order to re-create us with our personality and memories intact. And how loving of Jehovah to give us the opportunity for everlasting life, even by resurrecting us if necessary! Why can we believe in the resurrection promise? Because we are convinced that the One making the promise has the desire as well as the power, or ability, to fulfill it. *w23.04* 8-9 ¶2-4

**Thursday, February 6**

[*Joseph and Mary*] *were accustomed to go from year to year to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover.* —*Luke 2:41.*

Joseph and Mary worked together to keep their relationship with Jehovah strong. They understood the importance of worshipping Jehovah together as a family. (Luke 2:22-24; 4:16) What an excellent example for married couples today! If you have children, as did Joseph and Mary, it may be challenging to attend meetings or to schedule time for family worship. It may be even harder to coordinate time to study or pray together as a couple. Yet, remember that when you worship Jehovah together, you draw closer to him and to each other. So make worship a priority. If your marriage is strained, the idea of being together for family worship may not seem appealing. If so, begin by considering something short and enjoyable. This step can strengthen your relationship and your desire to do spiritual things as a couple. *w23.05* 22 ¶7-8

**Friday, February 7**

*Obadiah greatly feared Jehovah.* —*1 Ki. 18:3.*

How did wholesome fear affect Obadiah? For one thing, it made him honest and trustworthy; hence, the king put him in charge of the royal household. (Compare Nehemiah 7:2.) Obadiah's godly fear also gave him extraordinary courage—a quality that he surely needed. He lived during the reign of wicked King Ahab. (1 Ki. 16:30) Also, Ahab's Baal-worshipping wife, Jezebel, hated Jehovah so much that she tried to wipe out true worship in the northern kingdom. She even killed many of God's prophets. (1 Ki. 18:4) When Jezebel began hunting down God's prophets to put them to death, Obadiah took 100 of them and hid them "by groups of 50 in a cave and kept supplying them bread and water." (1 Ki. 18:13, 14) If discovered, courageous Obadiah would surely have been executed. Of course, Obadiah was human, and he did not want to die. But Obadiah loved Jehovah and those who served Him more than he loved his own life. *w23.06* 16 ¶9-10

**Saturday, February 8**

*I, Jehovah, am . . . the One guiding you.*—*Isa. 48:17.*

Jehovah continues to lead his people today as he did in the past. He has been doing so by means of his Word and his Son, the head of the congregation. Can we see evidence that God has also continued to use human representatives? Yes. Consider, for example, certain developments that took place in the late 1800's. Charles Taze Russell and his associates began to discern that the year 1914 would mark a turning point regarding the establishment of God's Kingdom. (Dan. 4: 25, 26) In reaching that conclusion, they depended on Bible prophecy. Was Jehovah guiding their Bible research? He clearly was. In 1914 world events confirmed that God's Kingdom had begun to rule. World War I broke out, followed by pestilences, earthquakes, and food shortages. (Luke 21:10, 11) Jehovah was indeed using those sincere Christian men to help his people. *w24.02* 22 ¶11

**Sunday, February 9**

*Many are the hardships of the righteous one, but Jehovah rescues him from them all.—Ps. 34:19.*

As Jehovah's people, we know that he loves us and that he wants us to enjoy the best life possible. (Rom. 8:35-39) We are also convinced that Bible principles always benefit us when we apply them. (Isa. 48:17, 18) What, though, if we face challenges that we did not expect? For example, a family member might disappoint us in some way. We may have serious health issues that limit what we can do in Jehovah's service. We might experience the devastating effects of a natural disaster. Or we may be persecuted for our beliefs. When we face such trials, we may wonder: 'Why is this happening to me? Have I done something wrong? Does this indicate that Jehovah is not blessing me?' Have you ever felt that way? If so, do not be discouraged. Many of Jehovah's loyal servants have struggled with similar feelings.—Ps. 22:1, 2; Hab. 1:2, 3. *w23.04* 14 ¶1-2

**Monday, February 10**

*I have resolved to obey your regulations at all times. —Ps. 119:112.*

When we face temptation, we immediately reject any thought or action that could damage our friendship with God. Jehovah expects us to be "obedient from the heart." (Rom. 6:17) His guidance is always in our best interests, and his laws are nonnegotiable. (Isa. 48:17, 18; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) The Devil uses physical and emotional attacks in an effort to weaken our resolve. His aim is "to devour" us, to destroy our relationship with Jehovah. (1 Pet. 5:8) Christians in the first century were threatened, beaten, and killed because of their determination to stand firm. (Acts 5:27, 28, 40; 7:54-60) Satan continues to use persecution today. This is evident in the brutal treatment of our brothers and sisters in Russia and other countries and in the personal attacks by opposers. Satan also uses "crafty acts" in addition to blatant frontal attacks. —Eph. 6:11. *w23.07* 15-16 ¶6-9

**Tuesday, February 11**

*Let us by love grow up in all things. —Eph. 4:15.*

The more you study God's Word, the more your love for Jehovah will grow. That love motivates you to apply what you learn. You make better decisions based on Bible principles. You improve your attitude and conduct because you want to please God. Just as a child imitates a loving parent, you try to imitate your heavenly Father. (Eph. 5:1, 2) We might ask ourselves: 'Is my love for Jehovah stronger now than when I first became a Christian? Since my baptism, is my way of thinking and acting more like Jehovah's way—especially in showing love to my brothers and sisters?' If "the love you had at first" has cooled off somewhat, do not be discouraged. Something similar happened to Christians in the first century. Jesus did not give up on them, and he does not give up on us either. (Rev. 2:4, 7) He knows that we can rekindle the love we felt when we first learned the truth. *w23.07* 8 ¶2-3

**Wednesday, February 12**

*You, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive.—Ps. 86:5.*

The apostle Peter made a series of mistakes. First, Peter displayed overconfidence, boasting that he would prove faithful even if the other apostles abandoned Jesus. (Mark 14:27-29) Next, Peter repeatedly failed to keep on the watch. (Mark 14:32, 37-41) Then, Peter abandoned Jesus to a mob. (Mark 14:50) Finally, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, even swearing to this lie with an oath. (Mark 14:66-71) How did Peter react when he realized the gravity of his sin? He broke down and wept bitterly. (Mark 14:72) Instead of rebuking Peter for his failings, Jesus told his friend that he would receive greater responsibilities. (John 21:15-17) Peter knew that he had sinned gravely, but he did not give up on himself. Why? Because he was convinced that his Master, Jesus, had not given up on him. What is the lesson? Jehovah wants us to be convinced of his love and forgiveness.—Rom. 8:38, 39. *w24.03* 18-19 ¶13-15

**Thursday, February 13**

*Those she has killed are numerous. —Prov. 7:26.*

Sexual immorality can cause shame, a sense of worthlessness, unwanted pregnancies, and broken families. Clearly, it is the course of wisdom to avoid the stupid woman's "house." In addition to facing spiritual death, many immoral people contract diseases that lead to a premature literal death. (Prov. 7:23) Verse 18 of Proverbs chapter 9 concludes: "Her guests are in the depths of the Grave." Why, then, do many accept her deceptive invitation that leads to tragedy? (Prov. 9:13-18) A common trap is pornography. Some think that viewing pornography is harmless. On the contrary, pornography is harmful, degrading, and addictive. Immoral images have staying power; they are difficult to erase from the mind. What is more, pornography does not deaden wrong desires; it inflames them. (Col. 3:5; Jas. 1:14, 15) Yes, many who view pornography go on to commit immoral acts. *w23.06* 23 ¶10-11

**Friday, February 14**

*It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it alone will stand forever.—Dan. 2:44.*

Even though other nations may at times challenge the Anglo-American World Power, they will not replace it. We know that because "the stone" representing God's Kingdom will crush the feet, the part of the image that depicts the Anglo-American alliance. (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45) Are you convinced that Daniel's prophecy regarding the feet of iron and clay is true? If so, that will affect the way you live your life. You will not seek material security in a world that will soon be crushed out of existence. (Luke 12:16-21; 1 John 2:15-17) Understanding this prophecy will also help you see the importance of the preaching and teaching work. (Matt. 6:33; 28:18-20) After studying this prophecy, why not ask yourself this question, 'Do the decisions I make show that I am convinced that God's Kingdom will soon put an end to all human governments?' *w23.08* 11 ¶13-14

**Saturday, February 15**

*Each of us will render an account for himself to God.—Rom. 14:12.*

Modestly accept that your age, health, and circumstances may limit what you can now do. Like Barzillai, be willing to decline privileges when physical limitations become a problem. (2 Sam. 19:35, 36) Like Moses, accept help and delegate responsibilities to others when appropriate. (Ex. 18:21, 22) Such modesty will prevent you from setting unrealistic expectations that could wear you out. We must also not feel responsible for the poor decisions that others make. We cannot make decisions for others; nor can we always shield them from the consequences of the bad choices they make. For example, a son or a daughter may eventually decide to stop serving Jehovah. That decision can cause untold grief to the parents. However, parents who blame themselves for their child's poor decision take on a heavy burden. It is not a weight that Jehovah expects them to bear. *w23.08* 29 ¶11-12

**Sunday, February 16**

[*Samson*] *fell in love with a woman . . . whose name was Delilah. —Judg. 16:4.*

Samson was imperfect like us, so at times he made bad choices. One decision in particular that he made led to tragic consequences. After Samson had served as judge for a while, he "fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah." Previously, Samson had been engaged to a Philistine woman, but that union "was from Jehovah," who "was looking for an opportunity against the Philistines." Later, Samson stayed in the house of a prostitute in the Philistine city of Gaza. On that occasion, God empowered Samson to carry away the doors of the city gate, weakening the city. (Judg. 14:1-4; 16: 1-3) The case of Delilah may have been different, though, because she was likely an Israelite. Delilah accepted a large sum of money from the Philistines in return for betraying Samson. *w23.09* 5 ¶12-13

**Monday, February 17**

*The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger.—Prov. 19:11.*

Insight can help us to be mild. An insightful person shows restraint when challenged about his beliefs. Some questions or challenges are like icebergs, the greater part lying below the surface. For example, a hidden motive or concern may prompt a person to ask a question. So before answering, we do well to realize that we may not know what has moved the person to raise the issue. (Prov. 16:23) Consider how Gideon responded to the men of Ephraim. They angrily challenged him as to why he did not call them earlier to join him in the fight against Israel's enemies. Was there an underlying reason for their contentious attitude? Hurt pride, perhaps? Whatever the case, Gideon wisely respected their feelings and gave them a mild answer. The result? Disarmed, "they calmed down."—Judg. 8:1-3. *w23.09* 16 ¶8-9

**Tuesday, February 18**

*I was the one he was especially fond of day by day.—Prov. 8:30.*

Jehovah and Jesus have the closest bond that can exist between a father and a son. No doubt it greatly pained Jehovah to see his Son mistreated, rejected, and tested. Any parent who has lost a child in death knows all too well the intense feelings of grief that such a loss brings. We have strong faith in the resurrection, but that does not erase the pain we feel when a loved one dies. This example helps us to understand how Jehovah must have felt when he watched his beloved Son suffer and die on that spring day in 33 C.E. (Matt. 3:17) Between now and the Memorial, why not do a personal study project or a Family Worship project that focuses on the ransom? And on the day of the Memorial, do not forget to watch the special Morning Worship program. When we prepare our own heart for the Memorial, we will be in a good position to help others benefit from it too.—Ezra 7:10. *w24.01* 11 ¶10-12

**Wednesday, February 19**

*He will make you strong.—1 Pet. 5:10.*

One way that we can receive power from Jehovah is by approaching him in prayer. In response to our prayers, Jehovah can give us "the power beyond what is normal." (2 Cor. 4:7) We can also be strengthened when we read his Word and reflect on it. (Ps. 86:11) Jehovah's message to us in the Bible "exerts power." (Heb. 4:12) When you pray to Jehovah and read his Word, you will receive the strength you need in order to endure, to maintain your joy, or to accomplish a difficult assignment. Note how Jehovah strengthened the prophet Jonah. Jonah had run away from a challenging assignment that Jehovah had given him. As a result, he almost lost his life in a violent storm and he put the lives of his shipmates in jeopardy. When he was thrown overboard, he found himself in a place he had never been before—the dark belly of a great fish. What did Jonah do to receive strength in that lonely, isolated place? He prayed.—Jonah 2:1, 2, 7. *w23.10* 13 ¶4-6

**Thursday, February 20**

*The end of all things has drawn close. —1 Pet. 4:7.*

Although the apostle Peter addressed his letters to the first-century Christians, Jehovah made these writings part of His Word. So we can now benefit from those letters. (Rom. 15:4) We are surrounded by people who have no faith in Bible prophecy. Opposers may mock us because we have eagerly anticipated the end for many years. Some critics claim that it will never come. (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) If we hear such comments from a householder, a workmate, or a family member, our faith could be shaken. Peter explained what can help us. It may seem to some that Jehovah is slow to end the present wicked system. Peter's words can help us to keep the right perspective, reminding us that Jehovah's view of time is vastly different from that of humans. (2 Pet. 3:8, 9) To Jehovah a thousand years are like one day. Jehovah is patient, not wanting any to be destroyed. When his day arrives, though, this system will end. *w23.09* 26-27 ¶2-5

**Friday, February 21**

*It is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things we have heard, so that we never drift away.—Heb. 2:1.*

Why did the apostle Paul write his letter to the Hebrew Christians in Judea? Likely, for two main reasons. First, to give them encouragement. Most of them had been raised in the Jewish religion. Their former religious leaders may have ridiculed them for becoming Christians. Why? Because Christians had no impressive temple to go to for worship, no physical altar on which to make sacrifices to God, and no priests to minister to them. This could have discouraged Christ's disciples and caused their faith to weaken. (Heb. 3:12, 14) Some of them might even have been tempted to go back to Judaism. Second, Paul pointed out to those Hebrew Christians that they were not making the effort to understand new or deep spiritual teachings, the "solid food" found in God's Word. (Heb. 5:11-14) Evidently, some of them were still holding on to the Mosaic Law. *w23.10* 24-25 ¶3-4

**Saturday, February 22**

[*Treat*] *younger women as sisters, with all chasteness.—1 Tim. 5:2.*

Some women choose not to marry. (Matt. 19:10-12) Be assured that Jehovah and Jesus do not look down on single Christians. Around the world, single sisters are a positive influence on the congregation. Their love for and sincere interest in others motivate these Christian women to become spiritual sisters and spiritual mothers to many. (Mark 10:29, 30) Some have become full-time servants. Christian women have a tremendous impact on the worldwide preaching work. (Ps. 68:11) Can you plan now to enter the full-time ministry? You might serve as a pioneer, a construction volunteer, or a Bethelite. Pray about your goal. Talk to others who have reached such a goal, and find out what you need to do to qualify. Then make a realistic plan. Reaching your goal will open up many exciting opportunities for you in Jehovah's service. *w23.12* 22 ¶16-17

**Sunday, February 23**

*The good news has to be preached first.—Mark 13:10.*

As the great tribulation draws close, we realize more than ever how urgent it is to obey the command to share in the preaching work. We may, however, find it difficult to focus on our ministry if we have suffered a financial setback or if we are facing opposition to our preaching work. What can help us to put Kingdom interests first? Remaining confident that "Jehovah of armies" is on our side. He will support us if we continue to put Kingdom interests ahead of our own. So we have nothing to fear. (Hag. 2:4) Jehovah wants us to focus on the life-saving work of making disciples. Haggai urged Jehovah's people to make a fresh start in their sacred service, as if they were laying the temple's foundation again. If they did, Jehovah promised to "send a blessing." (Hag. 2:18, 19) We too can be assured that Jehovah will bless our efforts if we give priority to the work he has assigned us to do. *w23.11* 16 ¶8; 17 ¶11

**Monday, February 24**

*All have sinned.—Rom. 3:23.*

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul stated that all humans are sinners. How, then, can anyone be viewed as righteous or blameless and thus gain God's approval? To help all sincere Christians answer that question, Paul pointed to Abraham. Jehovah declared Abraham righteous while he was dwelling in the land of Canaan. Why could Jehovah declare Abraham righteous? Was it because Abraham perfectly kept the Mosaic Law? Certainly not. (Rom. 4:13) That Law was delivered to the nation of Israel more than 400 years after God declared Abraham righteous. Essentially, then, on what basis did God declare Abraham righteous? In His undeserved kindness, Jehovah declared Abraham righteous because of his faith.—Rom. 4:2-4. *w23.12* 3 ¶4-5

**Tuesday, February 25**

*Do whatever is in your heart.*
*—1 Chron. 17:2.*

On the very night that the prophet Nathan spoke the above to King David, Jehovah told Nathan that David would not be the one to build the temple. (1 Chron. 17:3, 4, 11, 12) How did David react when he received this message? He focused on gathering the funds and the materials that his son Solomon would need for the project. (1 Chron. 29:1-5) Immediately after informing David that he would not be the one to build the temple, Jehovah made a covenant with him. Jehovah promised David that one of his descendants would rule forever. (2 Sam. 7:16) In the new world, imagine how happy David will be to learn that he is enjoying life under the Thousand Year Reign of Jesus, a King from his own family line! This account helps us to see that even if we cannot do all that we had hoped to do for Jehovah, our God may have other blessings in store for us that we could never have anticipated. *w23.04* 16 ¶8-10

**Wednesday, February 26**

*Jehovah will not forsake his people.*
*—Ps. 94:14.*

You may find that specific portions of the Bible can be particularly comforting when you are afraid. For example, you may find encouragement in the books of Job, Psalms, and Proverbs as well as in Jesus' words found in Matthew chapter 6. As you pray to Jehovah and read his Word, you will feel his comfort. We can have confidence that Jehovah will be there for us during dark times in our life. We will never be alone. (Ps. 23:4) Jehovah promises to guard, stabilize, support, and comfort us. Regarding Jehovah, Isaiah 26:3 says: "You will safeguard those who fully lean on you; you will give them continuous peace, because it is in you that they trust." So trust in Jehovah, and take advantage of the means he uses to help you. If you do, you will regain strength even during difficult times. *w24.01* 25 ¶16-17

**Thursday, February 27**

*No weapon formed against you will have any success.—Isa. 54:17.*

The inspired words of the scripture above are being fulfilled today. The following comforting words also apply to our time: "All your sons will be taught by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant. You will be firmly established in righteousness. . . . You will fear nothing and have no cause for terror, for it will not come near you." (Isa. 54:13, 14) Even "the god of this system of things," Satan himself, is powerless to stop the educational work that Jehovah's people are carrying out. (2 Cor. 4:4) Pure worship has been restored, and it will never be corrupted again. It is here to stay, for all eternity. No weapon formed against us will succeed! *w24.02* 4 ¶10

**Friday, February 28**

*Whoever has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me.—Matt. 10:37.*

As Christians, we take our dedication vow to Jehovah seriously. This affects our decisions and actions regarding family matters. We diligently care for our Scriptural family responsibilities, but we never put the desires of our family members ahead of what Jehovah requires of us. (Matt. 10:35, 36; 1 Tim. 5:8) Sometimes, that may mean sacrificing a measure of peace with relatives in order to please Jehovah. He created the family arrangement, and he wants us to have a happy family. (Eph. 3:14, 15) If we want to be truly happy, we need to do things Jehovah's way. Never doubt that Jehovah cherishes your self-sacrificing efforts to worship him as you care for your family and treat them with love and respect.—Rom. 12:10. *w24.02* 18 ¶11, 13

**Saturday, March 1**

*The hope does not lead to disappointment.—Rom. 5:5.*

The new world is not yet here. Note, however, some of the things that are here—the stars, the trees, the animals, and your fellow humans. No one would doubt that all these things are real, even though there was a time when they did not exist. They are now here only because Jehovah created them. (Gen. 1:1, 26, 27) Our God has also purposed to establish a new world. He will fulfill that purpose. In the new world, people will enjoy endless life in perfect health. At God's appointed time, the new world will become as real as the universe around us today. (Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:3, 4) In the meantime, use every opportunity you have to strengthen your faith. Build appreciation for the ransom. Contemplate Jehovah's power. Fill your life with spiritual activities. By doing so, you can be among "those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."—Heb. 6:11, 12. *w23.04* 31 ¶18-19

**Sunday, March 2**

*Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?—John 11:40.*

Jesus raises his eyes and prays publicly. He wants to give Jehovah all the credit for what happens next. Then Jesus calls out: "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43) And Lazarus walks out of the tomb! Jesus has just done what some thought would have been impossible. This account strengthens our faith in the resurrection hope. How so? Recall Jesus' promise to Martha: "Your brother will rise." (John 11:23) Like his Father, Jesus has the desire and the power to fulfill that promise. His tears revealed that he has a heartfelt yearning to undo death and the sorrow that it causes. And the moment Lazarus walked out of the tomb, Jesus proved that he has the power to raise the dead. Also, think about Jesus' reminder to Martha that is mentioned in today's text. We have sound reasons for believing that God's promise of a resurrection will come true. *w23.04* 11-12 ¶15-16

**Monday, March 3**

*Jehovah is near to all those calling on him, to all who call on him in truth. —Ps. 145:18.*

We may need to change what we pray for as we discern Jehovah's will more clearly. We must remember that Jehovah has a purpose, and he will fulfill it according to his established timetable. That purpose includes completely and permanently eliminating all problems that cause so much suffering today—problems such as natural disasters, sickness, and death. Jehovah will accomplish his purpose by means of his Kingdom. (Dan. 2:44; Rev. 21: 3, 4) However, until that time, Jehovah is permitting Satan to rule the world. (John 12:31; Rev. 12:9) If Jehovah were to solve mankind's problems now, it could appear as if Satan's rulership were having a measure of success. So while we must wait for Jehovah to fulfill certain promises, this does not mean that he leaves us without help. Jehovah will come to our aid. *w23.05* 8 ¶4; 9-10 ¶7-8

**Tuesday, March 4**

*Know how you should answer each person.—Col. 4:6.*

How can we help others to benefit from the Memorial? A first step, of course, is to invite them. In addition to contacting those we meet in our regular ministry, we can make a list of people to invite. These could include our relatives, workmates, schoolmates, and others. Even if we do not have enough printed copies of the invitation, we can share a link to the electronic version. Who knows how many will respond! (Eccl. 11:6) Keep in mind that those we invite may have questions—especially if they have never attended one of our meetings. We do well to anticipate their questions and prepare to answer them. Even after they attend the Memorial, newly interested ones may have further questions. We want to do whatever we can —before, during, and after the Memorial—to help those "rightly disposed" to benefit from this observance.—Acts 13:48. *w24.01* 12 ¶13, 15; 13 ¶16

**Wednesday, March 5**

*You are a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears.—Jas. 4:14.*

The Bible describes eight resurrections of people raised to life on earth. Why not make a careful examination of each account? As you do, look for lessons you can learn. Think about how each example demonstrates God's desire and power to restore the dead to life. Above all, reflect on the most important resurrection—that of Jesus. Remember that his resurrection was confirmed by hundreds of eyewitnesses and gives us a solid basis for our faith. (1 Cor. 15:3-6, 20-22) How thankful we are for Jehovah's promise of the resurrection! We can be sure that this promise will come true, for Jehovah has the desire and the power to fulfill it. Let us be determined to keep strengthening our faith in this precious hope. By doing so, we will draw ever closer to the God who, in effect, promises each of us, 'Your loved ones will rise!'—John 11:23. *w23.04* 8 ¶2; 12 ¶17; 13 ¶20

**Thursday, March 6**

*Walk in modesty with your God! —Mic. 6:8.*

Modesty and humility are closely linked traits. We show that we are modest by having a proper view of ourselves and of our limitations. We show that we are humble by displaying lowliness of mind. (Phil. 2:3) Generally, a modest person is also a humble person. Gideon was a modest and humble man. When Jehovah's angel told Gideon that he had been chosen to deliver Israel from the powerful Midianites, that humble man replied: "My clan is the least in Manasseh, and I am the most insignificant in my father's house." (Judg. 6: 15) He felt unqualified for the assignment, but Jehovah knew better. With Jehovah's help, Gideon completed his assignment successfully. Elders do their best to display modesty and humility in all things. (Acts 20:18, 19) They do not exaggerate their abilities or accomplishments; nor do they beat themselves up for their flaws or failings. *w23.06* 3 ¶4-5

**Friday, March 7**

*He will crush your head. —Gen. 3:15.*

The crushing of Satan's head is still over 1,000 years away. (Rev. 20:7-10) Before that happens, the Bible foretells these earthshaking events. First, the nations will proclaim "peace and security!" (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) "Instantly," the great tribulation will begin when the nations attack all false religion. (Rev. 17:16) After that, Jesus will pronounce judgment on humankind, separating the sheep from the goats. (Matt. 25:31-33, 46) Satan, though, will not be idle. In his hatred, he will incite a coalition of nations that the Bible calls Gog of the land of Magog to attack Jehovah's pure worshippers. (Ezek. 38:2, 10, 11) At some point, the anointed remnant will be gathered to heaven to join Christ and his heavenly forces to fight the war of Armageddon, the finale of the great tribulation. (Matt. 24: 31; Rev. 16:14, 16) Then Christ's Thousand Year Reign over the earth will begin.—Rev. 20:6. *w23.10* 20-21 ¶9-10

**Saturday, March 8**

*Your servant has feared Jehovah from his youth.—1 Ki. 18:12.*

Today many of Jehovah's servants live in lands where our work is banned. They show the secular authorities due respect, but like Obadiah, these precious brothers and sisters give to Jehovah what belongs to Him—exclusive devotion. (Matt. 22:21) They demonstrate their fear of God by obeying him rather than men. (Acts 5:29) They do this by continuing to proclaim the good news and by discreetly meeting together. (Matt. 10:16, 28) They are concerned that their brothers and sisters get much-needed spiritual food. Consider the example of Henri, who lives in an African land where our work was banned for a time. During the ban, Henri volunteered to distribute spiritual food to his fellow Witnesses. He wrote: "I am shy by nature. . . . Jehovah . . . gave me the courage I needed." Can you see yourself being as courageous as Henri was? You can be if you develop a healthy fear of God. *w23.06* 16 ¶9, 11

**Sunday, March 9**

*Through one man sin entered into the world.—Rom. 5:12.*

When Adam and Eve rebelled, it may have seemed that Satan had thwarted God's purpose to fill the earth with perfect, obedient people. Satan might have thought that Jehovah had very few options left. One option was to put Adam and Eve to death and create another perfect couple to fulfill His purpose for mankind. But if God had done that, the Devil would have accused Him of being a liar. Why? Because, as recorded at Genesis 1:28, Jehovah had told Adam and Eve that their offspring would fill the earth. Or perhaps Satan thought that Jehovah would allow Adam and Eve to produce imperfect offspring who would never be able to reach perfection. (Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:23) In that case, the Devil would no doubt have accused Jehovah of being a failure. Why? Because this option would not accomplish God's purpose, that is, to fill the Paradise earth with perfect, obedient descendants of Adam and Eve. *w23.11* 6 ¶15-16

**Monday, March 10**

*Do not go beyond the things that are written.—1 Cor. 4:6.*

Jehovah gives us clear direction through his Word and through his organization. We have no reason to add to the instruction he provides. (Prov. 3:5-7) Therefore, we do not go beyond what is written in the Bible or make rules for fellow believers about personal matters. Satan employs "empty deception" and "the elementary things of the world" to mislead and divide people. (Col. 2:8) In the first century, these included philosophies based on human reasonings, unscriptural Jewish teachings, and the teaching that Christians must observe the Mosaic Law. These were deceptions because they took people's attention away from the true Source of wisdom, Jehovah. Today, Satan uses the media and social networks to spread conspiracy theories and false news reports promoted by political leaders. *w23.07* 16 ¶11-12

**Tuesday, March 11**

*How great your works are,*
*O Jehovah! How very deep*
*your thoughts are!—Ps. 92:5.*

Jehovah resolved the rebellion of Satan and the first humans in a way that must have dumbfounded Satan. Instead of proving to be a liar, Jehovah proved to be truthful by allowing Adam and Eve to have children. And instead of proving to be a failure, Jehovah proved to be victorious. He kept his purpose moving forward by providing an "offspring" who would save obedient descendants of Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3:15; 22:18) Satan must have been stunned by Jehovah's ransom arrangement! Why? Because it is an arrangement based on unselfish love. (Matt. 20:28; John 3:16) That quality is not present in Satan's selfish character. So, what will take place because of the ransom arrangement? By the end of the Millennium, perfect, obedient descendants of Adam and Eve will inhabit a paradise earth—just as Jehovah originally purposed. *w23.11* 6 ¶17

**Wednesday, March 12**

*God will judge.—Heb. 13:4.*

We uphold Jehovah's law regarding the sanctity of life and blood. Why? Because Jehovah says that blood represents life, a precious gift from him. (Lev. 17:14) When Jehovah first allowed humans to eat the flesh of animals, he directed them not to eat the blood. (Gen. 9:4) He repeated this command when he gave the Mosaic Law to Israel. (Lev. 17:10) And he directed the first-century governing body to decree that all Christians "keep abstaining . . . from blood." (Acts 15:28, 29) We steadfastly obey this command when we make medical decisions. We also strictly adhere to Jehovah's high moral standards. Using vivid figurative language, the apostle Paul advises us to "deaden" our body members—that is, to take strong measures in order to eliminate wrong fleshly desires. We avoid looking at or doing anything that could lead to sexual immorality.—Col. 3:5; Job 31:1. *w23.07* 15 ¶5-6

**Thursday, March 13**

*He finally opened his heart to her.*
*—Judg. 16:17.*

Was Samson so trusting—so blinded by his love for Delilah—that he failed to discern what she was up to? Whatever the case, Delilah repeatedly pressured Samson to reveal the source of his strength, and he ultimately gave in to her demands. Sadly, Samson allowed himself to get into a situation that led to the loss of his strength and the loss of Jehovah's approval for a time. (Judg. 16:16-20) Samson experienced painful consequences because of trusting Delilah rather than Jehovah. The Philistines captured and blinded Samson. He was imprisoned in Gaza, and he became a lowly grinder of grain. Then he was humiliated when the Philistines gathered for a celebration. They offered a great sacrifice to their false god Dagon, as if he had given Samson into their hands. They brought Samson from prison to the party to provide "some amusement"—to make fun of him.—Judg. 16:21-25. *w23.09* 5-6 ¶13-14

**Friday, March 14**

*Take into consideration what is fine from the viewpoint of all men. —Rom. 12:17.*

Perhaps a coworker or a schoolmate questions our Christian stand on certain moral issues. We will do our best to defend our convictions while respecting our listener's view. (1 Pet. 3: 15) It is often helpful to view the question as a way to learn what he cares about rather than as an attack or a challenge. Regardless of the reason why someone has raised an issue, we do well to respond in a gentle, kind way. Our answer may then move him to reconsider his viewpoint. If a workmate asks, for example, why we do not celebrate birthdays, consider: Could he be wondering whether we are allowed to have a good time? We may be able to ease our workmate's concerns by expressing how much we appreciate his interest in fellow workers. That might open the way to a relaxed conversation about what the Bible indicates regarding the subject of birthdays. *w23.09* 17 ¶10-11

**Saturday, March 15**

*Be on your guard so that you may not be led astray with them by the error of the lawless people and fall from your own steadfastness.—2 Pet. 3:17.*

What a privilege we have to use the time that remains to give a witness to people of all nations. The apostle Peter urges us to "keep close in mind" Jehovah's day. (2 Pet. 3:11, 12) How? We do well to meditate—every day, if possible—on the blessings of the new world. Visualize yourself taking a breath of really clean air, eating healthful food, welcoming back loved ones as they are resurrected, and teaching people who lived centuries ago about the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. Such meditation will help to keep you in expectation and protect you against becoming indifferent to the times we live in. By "having this advance knowledge" of our future, we will "not be led astray" by false teachers. *w23.09* 27 ¶5-6

**Sunday, March 16**

*Be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous. —Eph. 6:1.*

Young people are surrounded by peers who tend to be "disobedient to parents." (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) Why do many of them disobey? Some feel that their parents are hypocritical. The children are expected to do what the parents themselves fail to do. Others view their parents' advice as outdated, impractical, or overly strict. If you are a young person, do you ever feel that way? Many find it difficult to apply Jehovah's command found in today's text. What can help you to do so? You can learn obedience from the best example—Jesus. (1 Pet. 2:21-24) He was a perfect human with imperfect parents. But Jesus honored his parents even when they made mistakes and misunderstood him at times.—Ex. 20:12. *w23.10* 7 ¶4-5

**Monday, March 17**

*The former commandment is set aside because it is weak and ineffective. —Heb. 7:18.*

The apostle Paul explained that the sacrifices the Law required could not fully remove sin. For that reason, the Law had been "set aside." So Paul went on to teach some deeper truths. He reminded his fellow Christians of "a better hope" based on Jesus' sacrifice that could truly help them draw "near to God." (Heb. 7:19) Paul explained to his Hebrew brothers why their Christian worship was far superior to the worship they offered in the past. The features of the Jewish religion were only "a shadow of the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ." (Col. 2:17) The shadow that an object casts is only a general shape of the real thing that casts the shadow. So, too, the ancient Jewish pattern of worship was just a shadow of the reality that was to come. We need to understand the arrangement Jehovah has put in place for us to have our sins forgiven so that we can offer acceptable worship. *w23.10* 25 ¶4-5

**Tuesday, March 18**

*In the time of the end the king of the south will engage with him in a pushing, and against him the king of the north will storm.—Dan. 11:40.*

Daniel chapter 11 speaks of two kings, or political powers, who struggle with each other for world domination. By comparing this prophecy with others in the Bible, we can identify "the king of the north" as Russia and its allies and "the king of the south" as the Anglo-American World Power. God's people who live under the rule of "the king of the north" are enduring direct persecution by this king. Some Witnesses have been beaten and thrown into prison for their faith. Rather than intimidate our brothers, the actions of "the king of the north" build their faith. Why? Because our brothers know that the persecution of God's people fulfills prophetic statements made by Daniel. (Dan. 11:41) Our knowing that can help us to keep our hope strong and our integrity intact. *w23.08* 11 ¶15-16

**Wednesday, March 19**

*Whoever touches you touches the pupil of my eye.—Zech. 2:8.*

Because he loves us, Jehovah is sensitive to our feelings and is eager to protect us. He feels hurt when we are hurt. As a result, we can rightly pray: "Guard me like the pupil of your eye." (Ps. 17:8) The eye is a sensitive and precious part of the body. So when Jehovah compares us to the pupil of his eye, it is as if he were saying, 'Anyone who harms you, my people, harms what is precious to me.' Jehovah wants us to be convinced that he loves us personally. But he knows that because of past experiences, we may wonder whether he could love us. Or we may be facing situations right now that test our confidence in Jehovah's love. What will strengthen our confidence? Learning how Jehovah expresses his love toward Jesus, the anointed, and all of us. *w24.01* 27 ¶6-7

**Thursday, March 20**

*The hand of our God was over us, and he rescued us from the hand of the enemy.—Ezra 8:31.*

Ezra had seen how Jehovah supported His people in times of test. Years earlier, in 484 B.C.E., Ezra was likely living in Babylon when King Ahasuerus issued a decree to exterminate the Jews throughout the Persian Empire. (Esther 3:7, 13-15) Ezra's life was in danger! In response to this threat, the Jews "in every province" fasted and mourned, no doubt turning to Jehovah in prayer for guidance. (Esther 4:3) Imagine how Ezra and his fellow Jews felt when the tables were turned on those who had plotted to destroy the Jews! (Esther 9:1, 2) What Ezra experienced during those challenging times may have prepared him for future tests and very likely strengthened his confidence in Jehovah's ability to protect His people. *w23.11* 17 ¶12-13

**Friday, March 21**

*God counts righteousness apart from works.—Rom. 4:6.*

The apostle Paul was primarily referring to "works of law," the law of Moses, given at Mount Sinai. (Rom. 3:21, 28) It seems that in Paul's day some Jewish Christians were having a hard time accepting that the Mosaic Law and the works required by that Law had been done away with. Consequently, Paul pointed to Abraham's example to prove that a righteous standing with God does not result from "works of law." It comes from faith. That is encouraging because knowing this gives us confidence that a good standing with God is within our reach. It means that we can develop faith in God and in Christ, which can actually lead to divine approval. On the other hand, the "works" discussed in James chapter 2 are not the "works of law" mentioned by Paul. James is referring to the works, or activities, that Christians do in their daily life. (Jas. 2:24) Such works indicate whether a Christian has genuine faith in God or not. *w23.12* 3 ¶8; 4-5 ¶10-11

**Saturday, March 22**

*A husband is head of his wife. —Eph. 5:23.*

Sisters who are considering marriage should choose their mate very carefully. Remember, you will come under the headship of the man you marry. (Rom. 7:2; Eph. 5:33) So ask yourself: 'Is he a mature Christian? Is he putting spiritual interests first in his life? Does he make wise decisions? Can he admit his mistakes? Does he respect women? Does he have the skills needed to support me spiritually, materially, and emotionally?' Of course, if you want to find a good prospective husband, you will need to be a good prospective wife. A good wife is "a helper" for her husband and "a complement" of him. (Gen. 2:18) And because she loves Jehovah, she works to enhance her husband's reputation. (Prov. 31:11, 12; 1 Tim. 3:11) You can prepare for this role by deepening your love for Jehovah and by being a helper to others at home and in the congregation. *w23.12* 22-23 ¶18-19

**Sunday, March 23**

*If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God.—Jas. 1:5.*

Jehovah promises to give us the wisdom we need to make good decisions. We especially need godly wisdom when making decisions that will affect the rest of our life. He also gives us the power to endure. Just as he did for the apostle Paul, Jehovah will give us the power we need to endure our trials. (Phil. 4:13) One means that he uses is our spiritual family. The night before Jesus sacrificed his life, he prayed earnestly. He begged Jehovah to spare him the reproach of being considered a blasphemer. Instead of doing that, Jehovah helped Jesus by sending one of his angelic brothers to strengthen him. (Luke 22:42, 43) Jehovah may also help us by means of an encouraging call or visit from one of our brothers or sisters. All of us can look for opportunities to offer "a good word" to fellow believers.—Prov. 12: 25. *w23.05* 10-11 ¶9-11

**Monday, March 24**

*Keep encouraging one another and building one another up. —1 Thess. 5:11.*

Inactive ones who attend the Memorial may have been afraid that they would not be well-received. So avoid putting them on the spot by asking embarrassing questions or by making comments that could be hurtful. These brothers and sisters are our fellow believers. We are happy to worship with them once again! (Ps. 119: 176; Acts 20:35) Is it any wonder that Jesus arranged for us to observe the Memorial of his death each year? When we do, we benefit ourselves and others in many ways. (Isa. 48:17, 18) We grow in our love for Jehovah and Jesus. We show how much we appreciate what they have done for us. We strengthen our bonds with our fellow believers. And we may help others learn how they too can enjoy the blessings that the ransom makes possible. Let us do all we can, then, to be ready for this year's Memorial —the most important day of the year! *w24.01* 14 ¶18-19

**Tuesday, March 25**

*I, Jehovah, am . . . the One guiding you.—Isa. 48:17.*

How does Jehovah guide us? Primarily, by means of his written Word, the Bible. However, he also uses human representatives. For example, he uses "the faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual food that helps us make wise decisions. (Matt. 24:45) Jehovah also uses other capable men to guide us. For example, circuit overseers and congregation elders provide encouragement and instruction that can help us get through difficult times. How grateful we are for reliable guidance during these critical last days! It helps us maintain Jehovah's approval and keeps us on the road to life. Even so, we might occasionally find it a challenge to follow Jehovah's guidance, especially when it is conveyed by imperfect men. At such times, we especially need confidence that Jehovah is the one leading his people and that following his guidance results in blessings. *w24.02* 20 ¶2-3

**Wednesday, March 26**

*Love, not in word or with the tongue, but in deed and truth.—1 John 3:18.*

We can grow in our love for God by diligently studying his Word. As you read the Bible, try to discern what each passage reveals about Jehovah. Ask yourself: 'How does this account show that Jehovah loves me? What reasons does it give me to love Jehovah?' Another way we can grow in our love for Jehovah is by regularly opening our heart to him in prayer. (Ps. 25: 4, 5) Jehovah, in turn, will answer our prayers. (1 John 3:21, 22) We should also grow in our love for others. Some years after his conversion, the apostle Paul met a fine young man named Timothy. Timothy loved Jehovah, and he loved people. Paul told the Philippians: "I have no one else of a disposition like [Timothy's] who will genuinely care for your concerns." (Phil. 2:20) Paul was obviously impressed by Timothy's love for the brothers and sisters. No doubt the congregations that Timothy served looked forward to his visits.—1 Cor. 4:17. *w23.07* 9 ¶7-10

**Thursday, March 27**

*I will never abandon you.—Heb. 13:5.*

Before Israel entered the Promised Land, Moses died. Without that faithful man, were God's people left in the lurch? No. As long as they were faithful, Jehovah provided for them. Before Moses died, Jehovah told him to commission Joshua to lead the people. Moses had been training Joshua for decades. (Ex. 33:11; Deut. 34:9) In addition, there were many other capable men taking the lead—chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and even tens. (Deut. 1:15) God's people were well cared for. We find a similar example in Elijah. He had been taking the lead in pure worship among the Israelites for decades. But the time came when Jehovah transferred him to a different assignment, down south in Judah. (2 Ki. 2:1; 2 Chron. 21:12) Were faithful people in the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel abandoned? No. Elijah had been training Elisha for years. Jehovah's purpose kept advancing, and he cared for his faithful worshippers. *w24.02* 5 ¶12

**Friday, March 28**

*Go on walking as children of light. —Eph. 5:8.*

The Ephesian Christians had embraced the light of Scriptural truth. (Ps. 119: 105) These Ephesians had abandoned their false religious practices and immoral conduct. They had "become imitators of God" and were doing their best to worship Jehovah and to please him. (Eph. 5:1) In a similar way, before we learned the truth, we were in religious and moral darkness. Some of us celebrated false religious holidays; others of us pursued an immoral lifestyle. But once we learned about Jehovah's standards of right and wrong, we made changes. We began to bring our life into harmony with his righteous requirements. And as a result, we have enjoyed many benefits. (Isa. 48:17) Now, though, we face ongoing challenges. We need to stay away from the darkness that we left behind and "go on walking as children of light." *w24.03* 21 ¶6-7

**Saturday, March 29**

*To the extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.—Phil. 3:16.*

You may feel that you are not ready for dedication and baptism. Perhaps you still need to make changes in your life to conform to Jehovah's standards, or perhaps you need more time to strengthen your faith. (Col. 2: 6, 7) Not all students progress at the same pace, and not all young ones are ready for dedication and baptism at the same age. Try to evaluate your spiritual progress according to what you are able to do and not in comparison with someone else. (Gal. 6:4, 5) Even if you realize that you are not yet ready to dedicate yourself to Jehovah, keep that step before you as a goal. Pray for Jehovah's blessing on your efforts to make whatever changes are necessary. (Phil. 2:13) You can be certain that he will hear your prayer and respond.—1 John 5:14. *w24.03* 5 ¶9-10

**Sunday, March 30**

*Husbands, . . . continue dwelling with* [*your wives*] *according to knowledge. —1 Pet. 3:7.*

On one occasion, Sarah was distressed, and she vented her feelings to Abraham, even blaming him. Abraham knew that Sarah was a submissive and supportive wife. He listened to her and tried to resolve the issue. (Gen. 16:5, 6) What can we learn? Husbands, you have the authority to make decisions for your family. (1 Cor. 11:3) Yet, the loving thing to do would be to listen attentively and consider your wife's opinion before deciding, especially if the decision will affect her. (1 Cor. 13:4, 5) On another occasion, Abraham decided to extend hospitality to unexpected visitors. He asked Sarah to drop what she was doing and prepare a large quantity of bread. (Gen. 18:6) Sarah acted quickly and supported Abraham's decision. Wives, you can imitate Sarah by supporting your husband's decisions. When you do, you strengthen your marriage.—1 Pet. 3:5, 6. *w23.05* 24-25 ¶16-17

**Monday, March 31**

*The wisdom from above is . . . ready to obey.—Jas. 3:17.*

After Gideon was appointed as judge, his obedience and courage were tested. He was given the dangerous assignment to destroy his father's Baal altar. (Judg. 6:25, 26) Later, after gathering an army, Gideon was twice directed to reduce its size. (Judg. 7: 2-7) Finally, he was told to attack the enemy camp in the dead of night. (Judg. 7:9-11) Elders should be "ready to obey." An obedient elder readily submits to what the Scriptures say and to direction from God's organization. He thus sets a good example for others. Still, his obedience may be tested. He may, for instance, find it hard to keep up with the direction he receives. In some cases, he may wonder whether certain direction is really practical or wise. Or he may be asked to take on an assignment that could put his freedom at risk. How can elders imitate Gideon's obedience in such situations? Listen carefully to direction and apply it. *w23.06* 4-5 ¶9-11

**Tuesday, April 1**

*What have you done to me? . . . Why have you tricked me?—Gen. 29:25.*

Servants of Jehovah in Bible times faced challenges that they did not expect. Consider Jacob. He was commanded by his father to take a wife from the daughters of Laban, a believing relative, and was assured that Jehovah would bless him richly. (Gen. 28:1-4) So Jacob did the right thing. He left the land of Canaan and journeyed to the home of Laban, who had two daughters—Leah and Rachel. Jacob fell in love with Laban's younger daughter, Rachel, and agreed to work seven years for her father before marrying her. (Gen. 29:18) But matters did not turn out as Jacob had hoped. Laban tricked him into marrying his older daughter, Leah. Laban allowed Jacob to marry Rachel a week later, but only if he worked seven more years. (Gen. 29:26, 27) Laban was also unfair in his business dealings with Jacob. In all, Laban exploited Jacob for 20 years!—Gen. 31: 41, 42. *w23.04* 15 ¶5

**Wednesday, April 2**

*Pour out your hearts before him. —Ps. 62:8.*

Whom can we turn to when we need comfort and guidance? We know the answer to that question. We can approach Jehovah God in prayer. Jehovah invites us to do just that. He wants us to pray often—to "pray constantly." (1 Thess. 5:17) We can freely approach him in prayer and seek his guidance in all aspects of our life. (Prov. 3:5, 6) Being the generous God he is, Jehovah places no limit on the number of times we can pray to him. Jesus understood that Jehovah values prayer. Long before coming to earth, he saw his Father answer the prayers of faithful men and women. For example, Jesus was at his Father's side when He answered the sincere prayers of Hannah, David, and Elijah, to name a few. (1 Sam. 1:10, 11, 20; 1 Ki. 19:4-6; Ps. 32:5) No wonder Jesus taught his disciples to pray often and with confidence!—Matt. 7:7-11. *w23.05* 2 ¶1, 3

**Thursday, April 3**

*Trembling at men is a snare, but the one trusting in Jehovah will be protected.—Prov. 29:25.*

High Priest Jehoiada feared Jehovah. This was evident when Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, usurped the throne in Judah. She was ruthless and so greedy for power that she tried to murder the entire royal line —her own grandsons! (2 Chron. 22: 10, 11) One of those children—Jehoash—survived because Jehoiada's wife, Jehoshabeath, rescued him. She and her husband hid the child and took care of him. In this way Jehoiada and Jehoshabeath helped preserve the Davidic line of kings. Jehoiada was loyal to Jehovah and did not tremble in fear of Athaliah. When Jehoash was seven years old, Jehoiada again proved his loyalty to Jehovah. He formed a plan. If it succeeded, Jehoash would become king, David's rightful heir. If the plan failed, however, Jehoiada would almost certainly lose his life. With Jehovah's blessing, the plan succeeded. *w23.06* 17 ¶12-13

**Friday, April 4**

*Know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that he grants it to whomever he wants.—Dan. 4:25.*

King Nebuchadnezzar could easily have viewed that message as seditious and could have put Daniel to death. But Daniel showed courage and delivered it anyway. What may have helped Daniel to be courageous throughout his life? While young, Daniel surely learned from the example of his mother and father. (Deut. 6:6-9) Daniel knew not only the basics of the Law, such as the Ten Commandments, but also the details regarding what an Israelite could and could not eat. (Lev. 11:4-8; Dan. 1:8, 11-13) Daniel also learned the history of God's people and knew what happened to them when they failed to live by Jehovah's standards. (Dan. 9:10, 11) Experiences throughout Daniel's life made him confident that Jehovah and His powerful angels were supporting him.—Dan. 2:19-24; 10:12, 18, 19. *w23.08* 3 ¶5-6

**Saturday, April 5**

*Wisdom is with the modest ones. —Prov. 11:2.*

Rebekah was an intelligent and decisive woman who took the initiative in appropriate ways throughout her life. (Gen. 24:58; 27:5-17) Yet, she was respectful and submissive. (Gen. 24:17, 18, 65) If you humbly support Jehovah's arrangements, as Rebekah did, you will be a positive influence on your family and on the congregation. Modesty is a quality that all mature Christians need. Esther was a modest, godly woman. Her modesty protected her from acting presumptuously. She listened to the advice of her older cousin Mordecai and followed it. (Esther 2:10, 20, 22) You can demonstrate similar modesty by seeking out and applying good advice. (Titus 2: 3-5) Esther showed modesty in another way. She was "beautifully formed and attractive in appearance"; yet, she did not draw undue attention to herself.—Esther 2:7, 15. *w23.12* 19-20 ¶6-8

**Sunday, April 6**

*God is greater than our hearts and knows all things.—1 John 3:20.*

Excessive guilt is a weight we were never meant to carry. If we confessed our sin, repented, and are taking steps to avoid repeating our sin, we can trust that Jehovah has forgiven us. (Acts 3:19) After we have taken those steps, Jehovah does not want us to continue to feel guilty. He knows how damaging persistent guilt can be. (Ps. 31:10) If we become overwhelmed with sadness, we might give up in our race for life. (2 Cor. 2:7) When plagued with excessive guilt, focus on the "true forgiveness" that God provides. (Ps. 130:4) When he forgives those who sincerely repent, he promises: "I will no longer remember their sin." (Jer. 31:34) This means that Jehovah will not thereafter hold your past sins against you. Do not punish yourself because your past mistakes may limit what you can now do in his service. Jehovah does not keep thinking about your sins, and neither should you. *w23.08* 30-31 ¶14-15

**Monday, April 7**

*Be steadfast, immovable.*
*—1 Cor. 15:58.*

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jehovah's Witnesses who listened to the guidance given by our organization avoided the undue anxieties experienced by those who listened to misleading information. (Matt. 24:45) We must not lose sight of "the more important things." (Phil. 1:9, 10) Distractions can take an excessive amount of our time and attention away from more beneficial pursuits. Ordinary features of life—such as eating, drinking, recreation, and secular work—could become distractions if we allow them to become the focus of our life. (Luke 21:34, 35) In addition, every day we are bombarded with news reports about social disputes and political issues. We cannot afford to be distracted by these debates. Otherwise, we may begin to take sides in our mind and heart. Satan uses various methods with the goal of weakening our determination to do what is right. *w23.07* 16-17 ¶12-13

**Tuesday, April 8**

*Keep doing this in remembrance of me.—Luke 22:19.*

For Jehovah's people, the Memorial of Christ's death is the most important day of the year. It is the only event that Jesus specifically commanded his followers to observe. (Luke 22:19, 20) It reminds us of ways we can show appreciation for Jesus' sacrifice. (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) It also gives us an opportunity to enjoy "an interchange of encouragement" with our brothers and sisters. (Rom. 1:12) And many interested people are motivated to start on the road to life by what they see and hear. Think, too, of how the Memorial unites our global brotherhood. No wonder the Memorial holds such a special place in our heart! *w24.01* 8 ¶1-3

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 9)**
**Luke 19:29-44**

**Wednesday, April 9**

*God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.—John 3:16.*

The more we meditate on the price Jehovah and Jesus paid, the more we can understand how much they love every one of us. (Gal. 2:20) The ransom is a gift of love. Jehovah has proved his love for us by sacrificing what was most precious to him—Jesus. Jehovah allowed his Son to suffer and die in our behalf. Jehovah does not keep his feelings to himself, but he warmly expresses his love. (Jer. 31:3) Jehovah has drawn us to him because he loves us. (Compare Deuteronomy 7:7, 8.) Nothing and no one can separate us from that love. (Rom. 8:38, 39) How does this love make you feel? *w24.01* 28 ¶10-11

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 10)**
**Luke 19:45-48; Matthew 21:18, 19; 21:12, 13**

**Thursday, April 10**

*On the basis of hope . . . , creation . . . will . . . be set free.—Rom. 8:20, 21.*

Anointed Christians cherish their heavenly hope. One of them, Brother Frederick Franz, said from his heart: "Our hope is a sure thing, and it will be fulfilled fully to every last one of the 144,000 members of the little flock to a degree beyond what we have even imagined." In 1991 Brother Franz affirmed: "[We] have not lost our sense of value of that hope. . . . We are appreciating it all the more the longer we have to wait for it. It is something worth waiting for . . . I evaluate our hope more highly than ever before." Whether we expect to enjoy everlasting life in heaven or on earth, we have a glorious hope that gives us reason to rejoice. And our joyful hope can grow even stronger. *w23.12* 9 ¶6; 10 ¶8

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 11)**
**Luke 20:1-47**

**Friday, April 11**

*It is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take sins away. —Heb. 10:4.*

Outside the entrance of the ancient tabernacle was a copper altar on which animal sacrifices were offered to Jehovah. (Ex. 27:1, 2; 40:29) However, those sacrifices could not provide complete forgiveness of sins for the people. (Heb. 10:1-3) The continual sacrifices of animals at the tabernacle pointed to the one sacrifice that would fully redeem humankind. Jesus knew that Jehovah had sent him to the earth to offer his human life as a ransom sacrifice for mankind. (Matt. 20:28) Hence, at his baptism, Jesus presented himself to do what Jehovah wanted. (John 6:38; Gal. 1:4) Jesus' life was offered "once for all time" to atone for, or cover permanently, the sins of everyone who exercises faith in Christ.—Heb. 10:5-7, 10. *w23.10* 26-27 ¶10-11

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 12)**
**Luke 22:1-6; Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11**

**MEMORIAL DATE**
**After Sundown**

**Saturday, April 12**

*The gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord.—Rom. 6:23.*

On our own, we could never redeem ourselves from sin and death. (Ps. 49: 7, 8) So at great cost to himself and to his dear Son, Jehovah arranged for Jesus to give his life in our behalf. The more we meditate on what Jehovah and Jesus sacrificed for us, the more we will appreciate the ransom. When Adam sinned, he forfeited the prospect of everlasting life not only for himself but also for all his children. In order to buy back what Adam lost, Jesus offered his own perfect life as a sacrifice. During his entire life on earth, Jesus "committed no sin, nor was deception found in his mouth." (1 Pet. 2:22) At the time of his death, Jesus' perfect life corresponded exactly to the life Adam lost.—1 Cor. 15: 45; 1 Tim. 2:6. *w24.01* 10 ¶5-6

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 13)**
**Luke 22:7-13; Mark 14:12-16**
**(Events after sunset: Nisan 14)**
**Luke 22:14-65**

**Sunday, April 13**

*He entered into the holy place, not with the blood of goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time, and obtained an everlasting deliverance for us.—Heb. 9:12.*

After Jesus was resurrected, he entered the Most Holy of the spiritual temple. Here we can clearly see the superiority of Jehovah's arrangement for pure worship based on the ransom sacrifice and the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The high priest in Israel entered a man-made Most Holy with the blood of animal sacrifices, but Jesus entered "into heaven itself," the holiest place of all, to appear before Jehovah. There he presented the value of his perfect human life in our behalf "to do away with sin through the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:24-26) Whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we all can worship Jehovah in his spiritual temple. *w23.10* 28 ¶13-14

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 14)**
**Luke 22:66-71**

**Monday, April 14**

*Let us, then, approach the throne of undeserved kindness with freeness of speech.—Heb. 4:16.*

Think about Jesus' role in the heavens as our reigning King and sympathetic High Priest. Through him we can approach God's "throne of undeserved kindness" in prayer and ask for mercy and help "at the right time." (Heb. 4:14, 15) May we never let a day pass without reflecting on what Jehovah and Jesus have done and are doing for us. Their love for us should touch our heart deeply and compel us to be zealous in our service and worship. (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) One of the best ways to show our appreciation is to help others become Witnesses of Jehovah and disciples of Jesus. (Matt. 28:19, 20) This is what the apostle Paul did. He knew that Jehovah's will is that "all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth."—1 Tim. 2:3, 4. *w23.10* 22-23 ¶13-14

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 15)**
**Matthew 27:62-66**

**Tuesday, April 15**

*Death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.—Rev. 21:4.*

Many of us use this heartwarming Bible passage about life in Paradise when preaching to others. How can we assure others—and ourselves—that the blessings described at Revelation 21:3, 4 will come true? Jehovah not only made this heartwarming promise but also provided convincing reasons why we can put our trust in it. We find reasons to trust in Jehovah's promise of Paradise in the verses that follow. There we read: "The One seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also he says: 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.' And he said to me: 'They have come to pass! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.' "—Rev. 21:5, 6a. *w23.11* 3 ¶3-5

**Memorial Bible reading:**
**(Daytime events: Nisan 16)**
**Luke 24:1-12**

**Wednesday, April 16**

*Keep on urging the younger men to be sound in mind.—Titus 2:6.*

A young man shows that he has developed sound thinking ability by making good choices in dress and grooming. Often, fashion trends are designed and promoted by people who have no regard for Jehovah or who lead immoral lives. Their immoral thinking is reflected in clothing styles that are tight-fitting or tend to make men look like women. When choosing what to wear, a young man who is growing to Christian maturity will be guided by Bible principles and by good examples in the congregation. He can ask himself: 'Do my choices show that I am sound in mind and considerate of others? Does the way I dress make it easy for others to believe that I am devoted to serving God?' (1 Cor. 10:31-33) A young man with thinking ability will gain the respect of not only his brothers and sisters but also his heavenly Father. *w23.12* 26 ¶7

**Thursday, April 17**

*My Kingdom is no part of this world. If my Kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought. —John 18:36.*

In the past, "the king of the south" has made direct attacks on Jehovah's people. (Dan. 11:40) During the first half of the 20th century, for example, many brothers were imprisoned because of their Christian neutrality and some Witness children were expelled from school for the same reason. In recent decades, though, Jehovah's servants living in the realm of that king have faced more subtle tests of their loyalty to God's Kingdom. For instance, during election campaigns, a Christian might feel tempted to support one political party or candidate over another. He may not go so far as to vote; but in his mind and heart, he takes sides. How important it is that we remain politically neutral not only in our actions but also in our thoughts and feelings!—John 15:18, 19. *w23.08* 12 ¶17

**Friday, April 18**

*May Jehovah be praised, who daily carries our load.—Ps. 68:19.*

As we run our race for life, we must "run in such a way that [we] may win it." (1 Cor. 9:24) Jesus said that we could "become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life." (Luke 21:34) These and other scriptures can help you to identify adjustments you might need to make as you run your race for life. We can be sure that we will win the race for life because Jehovah will give us the strength we need. (Isa. 40:29-31) Therefore, do not slow down! Imitate the apostle Paul, who put his all into acquiring the prize set before him. (Phil. 3:13, 14) No one can run this race for you, but with Jehovah's help you can succeed. Jehovah can help you carry your loads and throw off unnecessary weights. With Jehovah on your side, you will be able to run your race with endurance and win! *w23.08* 31 ¶16-17

**Saturday, April 19**

*Honor your father and your mother. —Ex. 20:12.*

When Jesus was 12 years old, his parents left him behind in Jerusalem. (Luke 2:46-52) It was ultimately Joseph and Mary's responsibility to make sure that all their children were among the group who were traveling home after the festival. When Joseph and Mary finally found Jesus, Mary blamed him for the trouble he had caused them! Jesus could have pointed out how unjust this was. Instead, he gave his parents a simple and respectful reply. Joseph and Mary, however, "did not understand what he was saying to them." Still, Jesus "continued subject to them." Young ones, do you ever find it hard to obey your parents when they make mistakes or when they misunderstand you? What can help? Think about how Jehovah feels. The Bible says that when you obey your parents, "this is well-pleasing to the Lord." (Col. 3:20) Jehovah knows when your parents do not fully understand you or when they make rules that are less than perfect. But when you choose to obey them anyway, you make him happy. *w23.10* 7 ¶5-6

**Sunday, April 20**

*Be reasonable, displaying all mildness toward all men.—Titus 3:2.*

A schoolmate might assert that Jehovah's Witnesses should change their view of homosexuality. We may need to assure him that we respectfully recognize that each person has the right to make his own choices. (1 Pet. 2: 17) We might then be able to highlight the Bible's beneficial moral standards. When confronted by someone who has strong views, we should not quickly assume that we know what he believes. For example, what if your schoolmate says that it is ridiculous to believe in God? Should you assume that he strongly believes in evolution and knows a lot about it? Actually, he may not have given the subject much thought. Perhaps you could direct him to material about creation found on jw.org. He might later be willing to discuss an article or a video found there. Yes, a respectful response may move him to reconsider his view. *w23.09* 17 ¶12-13

**Monday, April 21**

*You, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive; you abound in loyal love for all those who call on you. —Ps. 86:5.*

We can be confident that Jehovah will use us and bless us even if we have made mistakes, provided that we do all we can to correct our ways and continue to rely on him. (Prov. 28: 13) Samson was not perfect; yet, he did not give up in his efforts to serve Jehovah, even after his mistake with Delilah. And Jehovah did not give up on him. God once again used Samson in a mighty way. Jehovah still considered him to be a man of outstanding faith, including him in the list of faithful ones found in Hebrews chapter 11. How encouraging it is to know that we serve such a loving heavenly Father who yearns to strengthen us, especially when we are weak! So like Samson, let us beg Jehovah: "Remember me, please, and strengthen me." —Judg. 16:28. *w23.09* 7 ¶18-19

**Tuesday, April 22**

*Keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah.—2 Pet. 3:12.*

As we keep close in mind Jehovah's day, we are moved to share the good news with others. Still, in some circumstances we may hesitate to speak up. Why? We may temporarily give in to fear of man. That happened to Peter. On the night of Jesus' trial, Peter failed to identify himself as one of Jesus' disciples and repeatedly denied even knowing him. (Matt. 26:69-75) This same apostle, however, could later say with conviction: "Do not fear what they fear, nor be disturbed." (1 Pet. 3:14) Peter's words assure us that we can overcome fear of man. What can help us to overcome fear of man? Peter tells us: "Sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts." (1 Pet. 3:15) This includes meditating on the position and the power of our Lord and King, Christ Jesus. *w23.09* 27-28 ¶6-8

**Wednesday, April 23**

*Let sexual immorality and every sort of uncleanness . . . not even be mentioned among you.—Eph. 5:3.*

We must continue to fight against becoming entangled in "the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness." (Eph. 5:11) Experience has shown that the more a person looks at, listens to, or talks about unclean, immoral things, the easier it will be for him to fall into wrongdoing. (Gen. 3:6; Jas. 1:14, 15) Satan's world tries to deceive us, to make us believe that what Jehovah calls immoral and unclean is not wrong at all. (2 Pet. 2:19) One of the Devil's long-used tactics is to confuse people so that they are unable to discern what is right and what is wrong. (Isa. 5:20; 2 Cor. 4:4) It is no wonder that many movies, television shows, and websites promote ideas that go against Jehovah's righteous standards! Satan is trying to deceive us into thinking that unclean practices and lifestyles are harmless. —Eph. 5:6. *w24.03* 22 ¶8-10

**Thursday, April 24**

*These men are offering sacred service in a typical representation and a shadow of the heavenly things.—Heb. 8:5.*

The tabernacle was a tentlike structure that the Israelites initially carried with them as they moved from place to place. They used it for nearly 500 years until a permanent temple was built in Jerusalem. (Ex. 25:8, 9; Num. 9:22) The tabernacle was the central place for the Israelites to offer their sacrifices and their worship. (Ex. 29:43-46) However, the tabernacle also represented something much greater. It was "a shadow of the heavenly things," and it pictured Jehovah's great spiritual temple. The apostle Paul said that "this tent [or, tabernacle] is an illustration for the present time." (Heb. 9:9) So by the time he wrote to the Hebrews, the spiritual temple had already become a reality for Christians. It came into existence in 29 C.E. That year, Jesus got baptized and began serving as Jehovah's "great high priest" in the spiritual temple.—Heb. 4:14; Acts 10:37, 38. *w23.10* 25-26 ¶6-7

**Friday, April 25**

*Let your reasonableness become known to all men.—Phil. 4:5.*

To flourish spiritually, Christians must be flexible, ready to bend. How? We must be reasonable by adapting when our personal circumstances change and by respecting the viewpoints and decisions of others. As Jehovah's servants, we want to be reasonable. We also want to be humble and compassionate. Jehovah is called "the Rock" because he is steadfast, immovable. (Deut. 32:4) However, he is also reasonable. As events unfold, our God continues to adapt in order to cause his purpose to be realized. Jehovah created humans in his image with the ability to adjust to changing circumstances. He provided clear Bible principles that help us to make wise decisions no matter what challenges we may face. Jehovah's own example and the principles he has given us are evidence that while being "the Rock," Jehovah is also reasonable. *w23.07* 20 ¶1-3

**Saturday, April 26**

*When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me. —Ps. 94:19.*

In the Bible, Jehovah compares himself to an affectionate mother. (Isa. 66:12, 13) Just imagine a mother who lovingly cares for her little child and makes sure he has what he needs. When we are in pain, we can count on Jehovah's love. He does not give up on us when we do something wrong. (Ps. 103:8) The nation of Israel disappointed Jehovah time and again; yet, he expressed his unfailing love to his repentant people with these words: "You became precious in my eyes, you were honored, and I have loved you." (Isa. 43:4, 5) God's love has not changed. Even if we have made serious mistakes, when we repent and return to Jehovah, we will find his love for us intact. He promises that "he will forgive in a large way." (Isa. 55:7) The Bible describes this forgiveness as bringing "seasons of refreshing . . . from Jehovah himself." —Acts 3:19. *w24.01* 27 ¶4-5

**Sunday, April 27**

*The hand of Jehovah my God was upon me.—Ezra 7:28.*

Jehovah can help us when we are facing a challenge. For example, when asking our employer for time off so that we can attend a convention or when asking for an adjusted work schedule so that we can attend all our meetings, we create an opportunity to see Jehovah's hand in our life. We may be surprised at how well things turn out. As a result, our confidence in Jehovah grows stronger. Ezra humbly turned to Jehovah for help. Each time he felt overwhelmed by his responsibilities, Ezra humbly prayed to Jehovah. (Ezra 8:21-23; 9:3-5) Ezra's attitude moved those around him to support him and to imitate his faith. (Ezra 10:1-4) When we feel overwhelmed by anxieties about our material needs or about our family's safety, we must confidently turn to Jehovah in prayer. *w23.11* 18 ¶15-17

**Monday, April 28**

[*Abraham*] *put faith in Jehovah, and He counted it to him as righteousness.* —*Gen. 15:6.*

Jehovah does not say that if we want to be declared righteous we must do exactly what Abraham did. In fact, there are many ways in which we can manifest faith through our works. We can welcome new ones in the congregation, help brothers and sisters who are in genuine need, and do good to our family members, all of which are things that God will approve of and bless. (Rom. 15:7; 1 Tim. 5:4, 8; 1 John 3:18) An especially fine work that gives evidence of our faith is our zealously sharing the good news with others. (1 Tim. 4:16) All of us can show by our deeds that we have faith that Jehovah's promises will come true and that his ways are best. And if we do, we have the firm assurance that God will count us as righteous and will call us his friends. *w23.12* 2 ¶3; 6 ¶15

**Tuesday, April 29**

*Be strong and prove yourself a man.* —*1 Ki. 2:2.*

Close to his death, King David instructed Solomon with the above words. (1 Ki. 2:1, 3) All Christian men today do well to apply that advice. To be successful, they must learn to obey God's laws and apply Bible principles in all aspects of their life. (Luke 2: 52) Why is it so important for young brothers to become mature Christian men? A Christian man fulfills vital roles in the family and in the congregation. Young brothers, no doubt you have thought about the responsibilities you could have in the future. You might have the goal of being a full-time minister, a ministerial servant, and later a congregation elder. You might also want to get married and have children. (Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:1) To reach these goals and be successful, you need Christian maturity. *w23.12* 24 ¶1-2

**Wednesday, April 30**

*Time will fail me if I go on to relate about Gideon.*—*Heb. 11:32.*

Christian elders have been entrusted with the care of Jehovah's precious sheep. These devoted men treasure their privilege to serve their brothers and sisters, and they work hard to be "shepherds who . . . really shepherd." (Jer. 23:4; 1 Pet. 5:2) How thankful we are to have such men in our congregations! Elders can learn from the example of Judge Gideon. (Heb. 6: 12) He was both a protector and a shepherd of God's people. (Judg. 2: 16; 1 Chron. 17:6) Like Gideon, elders have been appointed to care for God's people during a very turbulent time. (Acts 20:28; 2 Tim. 3:1) We can learn from Gideon's modesty, humility, and obedience. His endurance was tested as he carried out his assignments. Whether we serve as an elder or not, we can grow in appreciation for our elders. We can support these hardworking spiritual men.—Heb. 13: 17. *w23.06* 2 ¶1; 3 ¶3

**Thursday, May 1**

*A great famine was about to come. —Acts 11:28.*

First-century Christians were not spared when a great famine came "on the entire inhabited earth." No doubt family heads worried about how they would provide for their household. And what about young people who had been planning to expand their ministry? Might they have felt that they should delay those plans? Regardless of their circumstances, the Christians adapted. They continued to preach in any way that they could, and they gladly shared their material belongings with fellow believers in Judea. (Acts 11:29, 30) Those who received relief supplies saw Jehovah's support firsthand. (Matt. 6:31-33) They must have felt closer to their fellow believers who had come to their assistance. And those who made donations or who otherwise shared in the relief work experienced the happiness that comes from giving.—Acts 20:35. *w23.04* 16 ¶12-13

**Friday, May 2**

*We know that we are to have the things we ask for, since we have asked them of him.—1 John 5:15.*

At times, Jehovah answers the prayers of his people by moving unbelievers to act in their behalf. For example, he moved King Artaxerxes to grant Nehemiah's request to return to Jerusalem so that he could help with rebuilding the city. (Neh. 2:3-6) Today, too, Jehovah can move even those who do not worship him to come to our rescue when we are in need. Our prayers are not usually answered in spectacular ways. But the answers we do receive are just what we need to remain loyal to our heavenly Father. So be on the lookout for Jehovah's answers to your prayers. From time to time, pause and reflect on how Jehovah is answering your prayers. (Ps. 66:19, 20) We must show faith, not just by praying to Jehovah, but also by accepting his answer to our prayers in whatever form it comes.—Heb. 11:6. *w23.05* 11 ¶13; 12 ¶15-16

**Saturday, May 3**

*To do your will, O my God, is my delight.—Ps. 40:8.*

When we dedicated ourselves to Jehovah, we vowed to worship him and to do his will. We must keep that vow. Living up to our dedication is not a burden. After all, Jehovah created us to do his will. (Rev. 4:11) He put within us a spiritual need and created us in his image. As a result, we are able to draw close to him and to find delight in doing his will. What is more, when we do God's will and follow his Son, we "find refreshment" for ourselves. (Matt. 11:28-30) So strengthen your love for Jehovah by meditating on all the good he has done for you and the blessings he has in store for you. The more your love for God grows, the easier it will be for you to obey him. (1 John 5:3) Jesus succeeded in doing God's will because he prayed to Jehovah for help and kept focused on his reward. (Heb. 5:7; 12:2) Like Jesus, pray to Jehovah for strength and keep the hope of everlasting life clearly in mind. *w23.08* 27-28 ¶4-5

**Sunday, May 4**

*Do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, because you do not know that God in his kindness is trying to lead you to repentance?—Rom. 2:4.*

We all appreciate people who are patient. Why is that the case? We respect those who can wait for something without getting frustrated. We appreciate that others are patient with us when we make mistakes. And we are grateful that our Bible teacher was patient with us as we struggled to learn, accept, or apply a Bible teaching. Above all, how thankful we are that Jehovah God is patient with us! Although we value patience in others, we ourselves may not always find it easy to be patient. For example, we may struggle to stay calm when stuck in traffic, especially if we are running late. We may lose our temper when others irritate us. And, at times, we could find it hard to keep waiting for Jehovah's promised new world. However, in all these cases, we need to be more patient. *w23.08* 20 ¶1-2

**Monday, May 5**

*He sent all the other men of Israel back home, and he kept only the 300 men.—Judg. 7:8.*

At Jehovah's request, Gideon reduced his army by more than 99 percent. He may have thought: 'Is this change really necessary? Will this work?' Nevertheless, Gideon obeyed. Elders today imitate Gideon by implementing recommended changes in theocratic direction. (Heb. 13:17) Gideon obeyed Jehovah despite his fears and the risk involved. (Judg. 9:17) After receiving assurance from Jehovah, Gideon was absolutely convinced that God would support him as he protected God's people. Elders living in areas where the work is under ban imitate Gideon. They courageously take the lead at the meetings and in the ministry despite the threat of arrest, interrogation, loss of employment, or violence. During the great tribulation, elders will need courage to obey instructions they will receive—regardless of the dangers involved. *w23.06* 5-6 ¶12-13

**Tuesday, May 6**

*Those honoring me I will honor. —1 Sam. 2:30.*

Jehovah had High Priest Jehoiada's fine deeds recorded for our instruction. (Rom. 15:4) And when Jehoiada died, he was given the exceptional honor of being buried "in the City of David along with the kings, because he had done good in Israel with respect to the true God and His house." (2 Chron. 24:15, 16) The account about Jehoiada can help all of us to develop fear of God. Christian overseers can imitate Jehoiada by remaining alert and by loyally protecting God's flock. (Acts 20:28) Older ones can learn from Jehoiada that when they fear Jehovah and remain loyal, He can use them to accomplish His purpose. Young ones can take note of how Jehovah treated Jehoiada and imitate Him by treating loyal older ones with dignity and respect, especially those with a long record of faithful service. (Prov. 16:31) Let us loyally support "those who are taking the lead" by obeying them.—Heb. 13:17. *w23.06* 17 ¶14-15

**Wednesday, May 7**

*The lips of the righteous one nourish many.—Prov. 10:21.*

At meetings, use discretion when deciding how often you will volunteer to comment. If we raise our hand too often, we might make the conductor feel pressured to call on us repeatedly even though others have not yet had an opportunity. This could discourage others from raising their hand. (Eccl. 3:7) When many publishers raise their hand during a study, we may not get to comment as often as we would like. At times, the conductor may not be able to call on us at all. That can be disappointing, but we should try not to take it personally when we are not called on. (Eccl. 7:9) If you are unable to comment as often as you would like, why not listen carefully as others participate and then after the meeting commend them for their comment? Your brothers and sisters may find your commendation just as encouraging as the comments you would have given. *w23.04* 23-24 ¶14-16

**Thursday, May 8**

*My heart is steadfast, O God. —Ps. 57:7.*

Study God's Word and meditate on it. Just as a tree can stand strong if it has deep roots, we can remain firm if our faith is deeply rooted in God's Word. As a tree grows, its roots grow deeper and spread farther. When we study and meditate, we strengthen our faith and deepen our conviction that God's ways are best. (Col. 2:6, 7) Reflect on how Jehovah's instruction, guidance, and protection helped his servants in times past. For example, Ezekiel paid close attention as an angel took detailed measurements of the visionary temple. This vision strengthened Ezekiel, and it provides us with practical lessons about how we can uphold Jehovah's standards for pure worship. (Ezek. 40:1-4; 43:10-12) We also benefit when we take time to study about and meditate on the deeper things of God's Word. We can have a steadfast heart, trusting fully in Jehovah.—Ps. 112:7. *w23.07* 18 ¶15-16

**Friday, May 9**

*Safeguard . . . thinking ability. —Prov. 3:21.*

The Bible is filled with good examples for young men to imitate. Those men from the past loved God and handled various responsibilities in caring for his people. You can also find good examples among the mature Christian men in your own family and in your congregation. (Heb. 13:7) And you have the perfect example of Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 2:21) As you carefully study these examples, consider their outstanding qualities. (Heb. 12:1, 2) Then decide how you will imitate these men. A man with thinking ability considers his options carefully before acting. So work hard to gain and maintain that ability. Begin by learning Bible principles and thinking about why these are beneficial. Then use those principles to help you make decisions that will please Jehovah. (Ps. 119:9) That is a major step toward becoming a mature Christian man.—Prov. 2:11, 12; Heb. 5:14. *w23.12* 24-25 ¶4-5

**Saturday, May 10**

[*Be*] *ready to make a defense before everyone who demands of you a reason for the hope you have, but doing so with a mild temper and deep respect.—1 Pet. 3:15.*

Parents can effectively teach their children how to respond mildly when their beliefs are challenged. (Jas. 3: 13) Some parents have practice sessions during family worship. They consider topics that might come up at school, discuss and demonstrate how to give an answer, and teach their children how to speak in a mild, appealing way. Practice sessions can help Christians to present convincing arguments and to convince themselves that they have sound reasons for their beliefs. The "Young People Ask" series on jw.org includes worksheets for teenagers. Those are designed to help young ones to reinforce their beliefs and to prepare answers in their own words. By studying this series as a family, we all can learn how to defend our faith in a mild, appealing way. *w23.09* 17 ¶10; 18 ¶15-16

**Sunday, May 11**

*Let us not give up in doing what is fine, for in due time we will reap if we do not tire out.—Gal. 6:9.*

Have you ever set a spiritual goal but struggled to achieve it? If so, you are not alone. For example, Philip wanted to improve the quality and frequency of his prayers, but he struggled to find time to pray. Erika's goal was to be punctual for meetings for field service; yet, she still arrived late for nearly every meeting. If you currently have a goal that you have not yet achieved, rest assured that you are not a failure. Even reaching a simple goal often requires time and hard work. The fact that you still want to reach your goal shows that you treasure your relationship with Jehovah and want to give him your best. Jehovah values your efforts. Of course, he does not expect more from you than what you can give. (Ps. 103:14; Mic. 6:8) So your goal should be reasonable, according to what your circumstances allow. *w23.05* 26 ¶1-2

**Monday, May 12**

*If God is for us, who will be against us?—Rom. 8:31.*

Courageous people may experience fear, but they do not allow it to stop them from doing what is right. Daniel was a very courageous young man. He studied the writings of God's prophets, including the prophecies of Jeremiah. From that study, Daniel later discerned that the long captivity of the Jews in Babylon was soon to end. (Dan. 9:2) Seeing Bible prophecy come true no doubt strengthened Daniel's trust in Jehovah, and those who have strong trust in God can be remarkably courageous. (Compare Romans 8:32, 37-39.) Most important, Daniel prayed to his heavenly Father often. (Dan. 6:10) He confessed his sins to Jehovah and shared his feelings with Him. And Daniel asked for help. (Dan. 9:4, 5, 19) He was a human like us, so he was not born with courage. Instead, he developed that quality through study and prayer and by trusting in Jehovah. *w23.08* 3 ¶4; 4 ¶7

**Tuesday, May 13**

*Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.—Matt. 5:16.*

When we obey the superior authorities, we benefit ourselves and others. How so? For one thing, we avoid the punishment that comes to those who disobey the law. (Rom. 13:1, 4) Our personal obedience can affect how the authorities view Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole. For instance, some decades ago in Nigeria, soldiers entered a Kingdom Hall during a congregation meeting, looking for rioters who were protesting the payment of taxes. But the officer in charge told the soldiers to leave, saying: "Jehovah's Witnesses are not tax agitators." Every time you obey the law, you could enhance the reputation of Jehovah's people—a reputation that may one day help protect your fellow believers. *w23.10* 9 ¶13

**Wednesday, May 14**

*You need endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the fulfillment of the promise. —Heb. 10:36.*

Some of Jehovah's servants have been waiting for the end of this system of things for a long time. From a human standpoint, the fulfillment of God's promise might seem to be delaying. Jehovah addressed that concern when he assured the prophet Habakkuk: "The vision is yet for its appointed time, and it is rushing toward its end, and it will not lie. Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it! For it will without fail come true. It will not be late!" (Hab. 2:3) Did God provide that assurance for the benefit of Habakkuk only? Or do His words have meaning for us today? Under inspiration, the apostle Paul applied those words to Christians, who are in expectation of the new world. (Heb. 10:37) Yes, we can be sure that even if our promised deliverance seems to delay, "it will without fail come true. It will not be late!" *w23.04* 30 ¶16

**Thursday, May 15**

*All the Israelites began to murmur against Moses.—Num. 14:2.*

The Israelites rejected the clear proof that Jehovah was using Moses as His representative. (Num. 14:10, 11) Repeatedly, they refused to recognize Moses' role. As a result, that generation of Israelites was denied entry into the Promised Land. (Num. 14:30) However, some Israelites did follow Jehovah's guidance. For example, Jehovah noted: "Caleb . . . kept following after me wholeheartedly." (Num. 14:24) God rewarded Caleb, even granting him his preferred choice of land in Canaan. (Josh. 14:12-14) The next generation of Israelites also set a good example in following Jehovah's guidance. When Joshua succeeded Moses as the appointed leader of the Israelites, they "deeply respected him all the days of his life." (Josh. 4:14) As a result, Jehovah blessed them by bringing them into the land that he had promised.—Josh. 21:43, 44. *w24.02* 21 ¶6-7

**Friday, May 16**

*Whoever loves God must also love his brother.—1 John 4:21.*

Just as a doctor is able to get some information about the health of our heart when checking our pulse, we can get some information about the strength of our love for God by checking our love for others. If we notice that our love for fellow believers has weakened somewhat, this may indicate that our love for God is also growing weak. But when we regularly show love for fellow believers, this signals that our love for God is strong. We should be concerned if our love for our brothers and sisters is growing weak. Why? Because it would mean that we are in spiritual danger. The apostle John makes that clear when he reminds us: "The one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:20) What is the lesson for us? Jehovah is pleased with us only if we "love one another." —1 John 4:7-9, 11. *w23.11* 8 ¶3; 9 ¶5-6

**Saturday, May 17**

*Your father and your mother will rejoice.—Prov. 23:25.*

When he was young, King Jehoash made a wise decision. Being without a father, he followed the direction of faithful High Priest Jehoiada. That priest instructed Jehoash as if he were his own son. In response, Jehoash wisely decided to take the lead in pure worship and serve Jehovah. Jehoash even arranged for Jehovah's temple to be repaired. (2 Chron. 24:1, 2, 4, 13, 14) If you are being taught to love Jehovah and to live by his standards, you are being given a valuable gift. (Prov. 2:1, 10-12) Your parents can provide training in many ways. As you apply the Scriptural advice you receive, you will make your parents happy. More important, you will make God happy and will build a lasting friendship with him. (Prov. 22:6; 23:15, 24) Does that not give you good reason to imitate the example of Jehoash when he was young? *w23.09* 8-9 ¶3-5

**Sunday, May 18**

*I will listen to you.—Jer. 29:12.*

Jehovah promises to listen to our prayers. Our God loves his faithful worshippers, so he will never ignore their prayers. (Ps. 10:17; 37:28) However, this does not mean that he will grant us all our requests. We may have to wait until the new world before we receive some of the things we ask for. Jehovah considers how our requests relate to his overall purpose. (Isa. 55:8, 9) Part of that purpose includes filling the earth with men and women who are joyfully united under his rulership. But Satan claims that humans would be better off ruling themselves. (Gen. 3:1-5) To prove that the Devil's claim is a lie, Jehovah has allowed humans to govern themselves. Yet, human rule has caused many of the problems we face today. (Eccl. 8:9) We understand that Jehovah will not remove all these problems at this time. *w23.11* 21 ¶4-5

**Monday, May 19**

*I have appointed you a father of many nations.—Rom. 4:17.*

Jehovah promised that through Abraham many nations would be blessed. However, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, the promised son had not yet appeared. From a human standpoint, it seemed impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have a son. That was a real test for Abraham. "Yet based on hope, he had faith that he would become the father of many nations." (Rom. 4:18, 19) And sure enough, that hope was realized. He did become father to Isaac, the long-hoped-for son. (Rom. 4:20-22) We can have God's approval and be counted righteous as God's friends, as Abraham was. In fact, Paul touched on that, writing: "The words 'it was counted to him' were not written for [Abraham's] sake only, but also for our sake, to whom it will be counted, because we believe in Him who raised Jesus." (Rom. 4:23, 24) Like Abraham, we need to have both faith and works as well as hope. *w23.12* 7 ¶16-17

**Tuesday, May 20**

*You have seen my affliction; you are aware of my deep distress.—Ps. 31:7.*

When you face a trial that makes you afraid, remember that Jehovah takes note of the trial and of how that trial makes you feel. For example, Jehovah noticed not only the mistreatment of the Israelites in Egypt but also "the pains they [suffered]." (Ex. 3:7) You may wonder, though, how Jehovah is supporting you while you face a frightening trial. So ask him to help you to see his support. (2 Ki. 6:15-17) Then consider: Has a talk or a comment at a congregation meeting strengthened you? Has a publication, a video, or an original song encouraged you? Has someone shared a reassuring thought or scripture with you? We might easily take for granted our loving brotherhood and the spiritual food we receive. Yet, they are extraordinary gifts from Jehovah. (Isa. 65:13; Mark 10:29, 30) They prove that he cares about you. (Isa. 49:14-16) And they prove that he is worthy of your trust. *w24.01* 4-5 ¶9-10

**Wednesday, May 21**

*Grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness.—Acts 4:29.*

Just before returning to heaven, Jesus reminded his disciples of their assignment to give a witness about him "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:46-48) A short time later, the Jewish leaders seized the apostles Peter and John and brought them before the Sanhedrin, demanding that these faithful men stop preaching, even threatening them. (Acts 4:18, 21) Peter and John said: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19, 20) When Peter and John were released, the disciples raised their voices to Jehovah in a prayer that focused on his will. Jehovah answered that sincere prayer.—Acts 4:31. *w23.05* 5 ¶11-12

**Thursday, May 22**

*This is my Son, the beloved. —Matt. 17:5.*

For untold ages, Jehovah and his beloved Son forged a close bond of deep love and affection. Their relationship is the oldest in the universe. Jehovah clearly expressed his love for Jesus, as we read in today's text. Jehovah could have simply said, 'This is the one whom I have approved.' However, he wanted us to know how much he loves Jesus, so he called him "my Son, the beloved." Jehovah was proud of who Jesus was and of what he was about to do. (Eph. 1:7) And Jesus had no doubts about his Father's feelings for him. Jehovah's love was so real to Jesus that he could feel it deep inside. He repeatedly expressed with confidence that the Father loved him.—John 3:35; 10:17; 17:24. *w24.01* 28 ¶8

**Friday, May 23**

*A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth.—Prov. 22:1.*

Imagine this: Someone you care about says something terrible about you. You know that it is a lie; yet, some believe it. Even worse, they begin repeating the lie, and many others believe it too. How would you feel? Most likely, the slander would make you feel bad, would it not? This scenario can help us understand how Jehovah felt when his reputation was tarnished. One of his spirit sons lied about him to the first woman, Eve. She believed the lie. That lie led our first parents to rebel against Jehovah. As a result, sin and death entered the human family. (Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 5:12) All the problems we see in the world—the deaths, the wars, the misery—have come about because of the lies that Satan has spread. Does Jehovah feel pain because of such slander and its results? Without a doubt. Yet, Jehovah is not bitter, or resentful. In fact, he remains "the happy God." —1 Tim. 1:11. *w24.02* 8 ¶1-2

**Saturday, May 24**

*How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God? —Gen. 39:9.*

How can you show a similar resolve to that of Joseph? You can decide now what you will do if a temptation arises. Learn to say no immediately to things that Jehovah hates, even refusing to dwell on them. (Ps. 97:10; 119:165) That way you will not waver when tempted. In your case, you may know that you have found the truth and that you want to serve Jehovah with all your heart but something still holds you back from dedication and baptism. You can take to heart the example of King David. You can beg Jehovah: "Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my anxious thoughts. See whether there is in me any harmful way, and lead me in the way of eternity." (Ps. 139:23, 24) Jehovah blesses those who are "earnestly seeking him." Your working toward the goal of dedication and baptism shows him you are doing just that.—Heb. 11:6. *w24.03* 6 ¶13-15

**Sunday, May 25**

*He does not need to offer up sacrifices daily.—Heb. 7:27.*

The high priest was authorized to represent the people before God. Israel's first high priest, Aaron, was appointed by Jehovah when the tabernacle was inaugurated. However, as the apostle Paul explained, "many had to become priests in succession because death prevented them from continuing as such." (Heb. 7:23-26) And as imperfect men, those high priests had to offer sacrifices for their own sins. Herein lies a sharp contrast between Israel's high priests and the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. As our High Priest, Jesus Christ is "a minister . . . of the true tent, which Jehovah set up, and not man." (Heb. 8:1, 2) Paul explained that "because [Jesus] continues alive forever, his priesthood has no successors." Paul added that Jesus is "undefiled, separated from the sinners" and that unlike the high priests of Israel, "he does not need to offer up sacrifices daily" for his own sins. *w23.10* 26 ¶8-9

**Monday, May 26**

*The former heaven and the former earth had passed away.—Rev. 21:1.*

"The former heaven" refers to political governments influenced by Satan and his demons. (Matt. 4:8, 9; 1 John 5:19) As used in the Bible, "earth" can refer to the earth's inhabitants. (Gen. 11:1; Ps. 96:1) Thus, "the former earth" refers to today's wicked human society. Jehovah will not merely remodel, or fix up, the existing "heaven" and "earth"; rather, he will make a clean sweep by replacing them. He will replace the present heaven and the present earth with "a new heaven and a new earth"—that is, a new government and a new human society. Jehovah will make the earth and humans like new by bringing them to a state of perfection. As Isaiah foretold, the entire earth will be made into a gardenlike park—a global Eden. We will also be made new, or experience restoration, on a personal level. The lame, the blind, and the deaf will be healed, and even the dead will be restored to life.—Isa. 25:8; 35:1-7. *w23.11* 4 ¶9-10

**Tuesday, May 27**

*Prove yourselves ready.—Matt. 24:44.*

The "great tribulation" will strike suddenly. (Matt. 24:21) Unlike many other disasters, however, the great tribulation will not catch everyone off guard. About 2,000 years ago, Jesus warned his followers to get ready for that day. If we are prepared, it will be easier for us to go through that difficult time and to help others to do the same. (Luke 21:36) We will need endurance to obey Jehovah, trusting that he will protect us. What will we do if our brothers lose some or all of their material things? (Hab. 3:17, 18) We will need compassion to move us to provide them with relief. How will we react if, as a result of the attack by a coalition of nations, we have to live in close quarters with our brothers and sisters for a while? (Ezek. 38:10-12) We will need strong love for them to help us get through that difficult time. *w23.07* 2 ¶2-3

**Wednesday, May 28**

*Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, making the best use of your time. —Eph. 5:15, 16.*

Married couples can learn from the example of Aquila and Priscilla, a couple appreciated by many early Christians. (Rom. 16:3, 4) They worked, preached, and helped others together. (Acts 18:2, 3, 24-26) In fact, whenever the Bible mentions Aquila and Priscilla, it always mentions them together. How can couples imitate them? Think about the many things that you and your spouse need to do. Could you handle some of these tasks as a couple instead of individually? For example, Aquila and Priscilla preached together. Do you regularly make plans to do the same? Aquila and Priscilla also worked together. You and your spouse may not have the same job, but could you do household chores together? (Eccl. 4:9) When you help each other perform a task, you feel more like a team and you have the opportunity to talk. *w23.05* 22-23 ¶10-12

**Thursday, May 29**

*When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.—Ps. 56:3.*

Everyone feels afraid at times. For instance, when King Saul was trying to hunt David down, David decided to flee to the Philistine city of Gath. The king of Gath, Achish, soon learned that David was the mighty warrior who was celebrated in song as having struck down "tens of thousands" of Philistines. David "became very much afraid." (1 Sam. 21:10-12) He worried about what Achish would do to him. How did David conquer his fears? In Psalm 56, David expresses his feelings while he was in Gath. That psalm lays bare David's fears, but it also reveals how he conquered those fears. When he felt afraid, David trusted in Jehovah. (Ps. 56:1-3, 11) His trust was not misplaced. With Jehovah's blessing, David devised an unusual but effective strategy: He pretended to be crazy! Achish now viewed David more as an irritant than a threat, so David was able to escape.—1 Sam. 21:13–22:1. *w24.01* 2 ¶1-3

**Friday, May 30**

*Those with him who are called and chosen and faithful will do so. —Rev. 17:14.*

Who are the ones mentioned in today's text? The resurrected anointed ones! So when the last of the anointed on earth are taken to heaven near the end of the great tribulation, one of their first assignments will be to fight. After being raised to heaven, they will serve along with Christ and his holy angels, waging the final war against God's enemies. Think of it! On earth, some anointed Christians are elderly, even frail. But once resurrected to life in heaven, they will be mighty and immortal spirit creatures, assigned to fight alongside their Warrior-King, Jesus Christ. After the war of Armageddon has been fought, they will share in guiding mankind to perfection. Without a doubt, they will then do their beloved brothers and sisters on earth a lot more good in heaven than they ever could as mere imperfect humans! *w24.02* 6-7 ¶15-16

**Saturday, May 31**

*Keep walking by spirit and you will carry out no fleshly desire at all. —Gal. 5:16.*

Some who are ready for dedication and baptism still hold back. They may wonder, 'What if afterward I commit a serious sin and get disfellowshipped?' If you have that fear, be assured that Jehovah will give you everything you need "to walk worthily of [him] in order to please him fully." (Col. 1:10) He will also give you the strength to do what is right. He has already proved that he can do that by how he has dealt with many others. (1 Cor. 10:13) That is one reason why relatively few people are expelled from the Christian congregation. Jehovah equips his people to remain faithful. Every imperfect human is tempted to do wrong things. (Jas. 1:14) However, whether you act on temptation is a choice —your choice. The fact is that ultimately you are the one who is in control of how you will live. Though some people may make claims to the contrary, you can learn to control your impulses. *w24.03* 5 ¶11-12

**Sunday, June 1**

*We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations. —Acts 14:22.*

Jehovah blessed the first-century Christians as they adapted to changing circumstances. They were often persecuted, sometimes when they may have least expected it. Consider what happened to Barnabas and the apostle Paul while they were preaching in the area of Lystra. At first, they were warmly received by those who listened to them. But later, opposers "persuaded the crowds," and some of those same people stoned Paul and left him for dead. (Acts 14:19) But Barnabas and Paul continued preaching elsewhere. The results? They made "quite a few disciples," and their words and example strengthened their fellow believers. (Acts 14:21, 22) Many benefited because Barnabas and Paul did not give up in the face of sudden persecution. As long as we do not give up in the work Jehovah has asked us to do, we will be blessed. *w23.04* 16-17 ¶13-14

**Monday, June 2**

*Listen, O Jehovah, to my prayer; and pay attention to my pleas for help. I call on you in the day of my distress, for you will answer me. —Ps. 86:6, 7.*

King David faced many dangerous enemies throughout his life, and he often sought Jehovah's help in prayer. David was sure that Jehovah heard and answered his prayers. You can have that same confidence. The Bible assures us that Jehovah can give us the wisdom and the power we need to endure. He may use our spiritual family or even those who do not worship him at present to help us in some way. While Jehovah may not always answer our prayers in the way that we expect, we know that he will answer them. He will provide just what we need and exactly when we need it. So continue to pray in faith, confident that Jehovah will care for you now and that he will "satisfy the desire of every living thing" in the new world to come.—Ps. 145:16. *w23.05* 8 ¶4; 13 ¶17-18

**Tuesday, June 3**

*With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me? —Ps. 116:12.*

It is good to focus on the blessings received when reaching a goal. What blessings could you focus on? If your goal relates to Bible reading or prayer, think about how it will strengthen your friendship with Jehovah. (Ps. 145:18, 19) If your goal is to cultivate a Christian quality, focus on how it will improve your relationships with others. (Col. 3:14) Why not make a list of all the reasons why you want to reach your goal? Regularly consult that list. Also, spend time with those who will motivate you. (Prov. 13:20) Realistically, though, we all have days when we do not feel motivated. Does this mean that we cannot work on our goal? No. We can still work toward our goal even when we are not motivated. Though this will require self-discipline, the results are worthwhile. *w23.05* 27-28 ¶5-8

**Wednesday, June 4**

*Whatever a person is sowing, this he will also reap.—Gal. 6:7.*

Knowing that we are accountable for our decisions can prompt us to confess our sins, correct our errors, and avoid repeating our mistakes. Taking such actions can help us to stay in the race for life. If you cannot undo a poor decision, accept your current situation. Do not waste your emotional and mental energy justifying yourself or blaming yourself or others. Instead, acknowledge your mistakes and work to make the best of your present circumstances. If you feel guilty about a wrong you committed, humbly turn to Jehovah in prayer, admit your error, and ask him to forgive you. (Ps. 25:11; 51:3, 4) Apologize to those you may have wronged, and if necessary, seek the help of the elders. (Jas. 5:14, 15) Learn from your mistakes, and try to avoid repeating them. As you do, you can be certain that Jehovah will show you mercy and provide you with the support you need.—Ps. 103:8-13. *w23.08* 28-29 ¶8-9

**Thursday, June 5**

*Jehoash continued doing what was right in Jehovah's eyes all the days that Jehoiada the priest instructed him.—2 Ki. 12:2.*

King Jehoash benefited from the good influence of Jehoiada. As a result, the young king wanted to please Jehovah. But after Jehoiada died, Jehoash listened to apostate princes. (2 Chron. 24:4, 17, 18) Deeply hurt, Jehovah "kept sending prophets among them to bring them back . . . , but they refused to listen." They did not even listen to Jehoiada's son Zechariah, who was not only Jehovah's prophet and priest but also Jehoash's cousin. In fact, King Jehoash had Zechariah killed. (2 Chron. 22:11; 24:19-22) Jehoash did not maintain a healthy fear of Jehovah. Jehovah had stated: "Those despising me will be treated with contempt." (1 Sam. 2:30) A small Syrian army later defeated Jehoash's "very large army" and "severely wounded" him. (2 Chron. 24: 24, 25) Jehoash was assassinated by his own servants for killing Zechariah. *w23.06* 18-19 ¶16-17

**Friday, June 6**

*You were once darkness, but you are now light.—Eph. 5:8.*

The apostle Paul had spent quite some time in Ephesus, preaching and teaching the good news. (Acts 19:1, 8-10; 20:20, 21) He loved his brothers very much and wanted to help them to remain faithful to Jehovah. The Ephesians to whom Paul wrote were once enslaved to false religious ideas and superstitions. Ephesus was famous for its gross immorality and brazen conduct. Obscene talk was commonly heard in the city's theaters and even at religious festivals. (Eph. 5:3) Many of its inhabitants were "past all moral sense," an expression that literally means "having ceased to feel pain." (Eph. 4:17-19) Before learning what was truly right or truly wrong, the Ephesians did not feel pangs of conscience. Paul could thus describe them as being "in darkness mentally and alienated from the life that belongs to God." Some of the Ephesians, though, did not remain in darkness. *w24.03* 20 ¶2, 4; 21 ¶5-6

**Saturday, June 7**

*Those hoping in Jehovah will regain power. . . . They will . . . not tire out. —Isa. 40:31.*

Gideon's assignment as judge involved a lot of physical exertion. When the Midianites fled during the nighttime battle, Gideon chased after them from the Valley of Jezreel all the way to the Jordan River. (Judg. 7:22) Did Gideon stop at the Jordan? No! Though tired, he and his 300 men crossed over and continued the pursuit. Finally, they caught up with the Midianites and defeated them. (Judg. 8:4-12) Gideon trusted that Jehovah would give him strength, and he was not disappointed. (Judg. 6:14, 34) Once, Gideon and his men were pursuing two Midianite kings on foot while the kings may have been riding camels. (Judg. 8:12, 21) Yet, with God's help, the determined Israelites prevailed. Elders can likewise rely on Jehovah, the one who "never tires out or grows weary." He will give them strength when they need it.—Isa. 40:28, 29. *w23.06* 6 ¶14, 16

**Sunday, June 8**

[*Jehovah*] *will neither desert you nor abandon you.—Deut. 31:6.*

We can have a steadfast heart no matter what trials we may face. So trust in Jehovah. Consider how Barak succeeded because of trusting in Jehovah's direction. Although neither a shield nor a lance could be seen in all the land, Jehovah instructed him to go into battle against the well-equipped military forces of the Canaanite army chief Sisera. (Judg. 5:8) The prophetess Deborah told Barak to go down to the level plain to meet Sisera and his 900 chariots. Even though the chariots would offer a clear advantage on the flat ground, Barak obeyed. As the soldiers descended Mount Tabor, Jehovah sent pouring rains from heaven. Sisera's chariots became mired in mud, and Jehovah gave Barak the victory. (Judg. 4:1-7, 10, 13-16) Similarly, Jehovah will give us the victory if we trust in him and in the direction he provides through his representatives. *w23.07* 19 ¶17-18

**Monday, June 9**

*The one who has endured to the end will be saved.—Matt. 24:13.*

Patience is essential for our salvation. Like faithful servants of the past, we need to wait patiently for God to fulfill his promises. (Heb. 6:11, 12) The Bible compares our situation to that of a farmer. (Jas. 5:7, 8) A farmer works hard to plant and water his crop, but he does not know exactly when it will grow. So the farmer waits patiently, trusting that he will reap a crop. Likewise, we stay busy in spiritual activities even though we "do not know on what day [our] Lord is coming." (Matt. 24:42) We wait patiently, confident that in his due time, Jehovah will fulfill all that he has promised. If we were to become impatient, we might get tired of waiting and start drifting away from the truth. We could also begin to pursue things that might give us instant gratification. But if we are patient, we can endure to the end and be saved.—Mic. 7:7. *w23.08* 22 ¶7

**Tuesday, June 10**

*The toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay.—Dan. 2:42.*

By comparing the prophecy at Daniel 2:41-43 with others in the books of Daniel and Revelation, we can conclude that the feet represent the Anglo-American alliance, the dominant world power today. Regarding this world power, Daniel says that "the kingdom will be partly strong and partly fragile." Why partly fragile? Because the common people, pictured by the soft clay, undermine its ability to act with ironlike strength. From Daniel's description of the dream image, we learn several important truths. First, the Anglo-American World Power has shown its strength in some ways. For example, it played a key role in winning World War I and World War II. However, this world power has been weakened and will continue to be weakened by internal conflicts among its own citizens. Second, this alliance will be the last world power to rule before God's Kingdom puts an end to all human kingdoms. *w23.08* 10-11 ¶12-13

**Wednesday, June 11**

*In my distress I called on Jehovah, to my God I kept crying for help. From his temple he heard my voice. —Ps. 18:6.*

At times, David felt distressed because of all the problems and trials he was facing. (Ps. 18:4, 5) Yet, Jehovah's tender love and care refreshed him. Jehovah led his exhausted friend to "grassy pastures" and "well-watered resting-places." As a result, David recovered his strength and was able to keep going. (Ps. 18:28-32; 23:2) Similarly today, "it is because of Jehovah's loyal love that we have not come to our finish" when faced with life's trials and struggles. (Lam. 3:22; Col. 1:11) David's life was often in danger, and he had many powerful enemies. However, Jehovah's love made him feel safe and protected. David could feel that Jehovah was with him in every situation, and that reassured him. Thus, he could sing: "[Jehovah] rescued me from all my fears." (Ps. 34:4) David's fears were real, but Jehovah's love was stronger than his fears. *w24.01* 30 ¶15-17

**Thursday, June 12**

*If sinners try to entice you, do not consent.—Prov. 1:10.*

Learn from Jehoash's bad decisions. After High Priest Jehoiada died, Jehoash chose bad associates. (2 Chron. 24:17, 18) He decided to listen to the princes of Judah who did not love Jehovah. You likely agree that Jehoash should have avoided those troublemakers. Instead, he listened to his so-called friends. In fact, when Jehoash's cousin Zechariah tried to correct him, Jehoash had him put to death. (2 Chron. 24:20, 21; Matt. 23:35) How terrible and foolish! Jehoash began his life well, but sadly he became an apostate and a murderer. Finally, his own servants killed him. (2 Chron. 24:22-25) How different his life would have turned out had he continued to listen to Jehovah and to those who loved Him! *w23.09* 9 ¶6

**Friday, June 13**

*Stop being afraid.—Luke 5:10.*

Jesus knew that the apostle Peter could remain faithful. So Jesus kindly told Peter to "stop being afraid." Jesus' confidence in Peter had a lasting effect on him. Peter and his brother Andrew later abandoned their fishing business and became full-time followers of the Messiah, a decision that led to remarkable blessings. (Mark 1:16-18) Peter had many wonderful experiences as a follower of Christ. He saw Jesus heal the sick, expel demons, and even raise the dead. (Matt. 8:14-17; Mark 5:37, 41, 42) Peter also witnessed a vision of Jesus' future Kingdom glory, an event that had a great impact on him. (Mark 9:1-8; 2 Pet. 1: 16-18) Yes, Peter saw things he could never have anticipated. How glad he must have been that he did not allow any negative feelings about himself to cause him to miss out on these blessings! *w23.09* 21 ¶4-5

**Saturday, June 14**

*Jesus said to him: "I say to you, not up to seven times, but up to 77 times."—Matt. 18:22.*

In his first letter, the apostle Peter used the expression "intense love." Such love covers, not just a few sins, but "a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8) Perhaps Peter recalled the lesson about forgiveness that Jesus had taught him years earlier. At the time, Peter likely believed that he was being generous when he suggested that he would forgive his brother "up to seven times." But Jesus taught him—and us—to forgive "up to 77 times," meaning without limit. (Matt. 18:21) If you have found it hard to apply this counsel, take heart! All of Jehovah's imperfect servants have at times struggled to forgive. The important thing now is for you to take any necessary steps to forgive your brother and to make peace with him. *w23.09* 29 ¶12

**Sunday, June 15**

*I called out to Jehovah, and he answered me.—Jonah 2:2.*

In the belly of the fish, Jonah was confident that Jehovah would listen to his humble and repentant prayer and that Jehovah would help him. Later, Jonah was returned to dry land, and he was ready to accept and fulfill his next assignment. (Jonah 2:10–3:4) During a trial, do you ever feel too anxious to express yourself clearly in prayer? Or do you feel too weak to study? Remember that Jehovah understands your situation perfectly. So even when you offer a simple prayer, you can be sure that he will give you exactly what you need. (Eph. 3:20) If your physical or emotional pain makes it difficult for you to read and study, you might try listening to audio recordings of the Bible or of Bible-based publications. You may also find it helpful to listen to one of our songs or to watch a video on jw.org. By praying to Jehovah and by looking for the answer in the spiritual provisions that he makes available, you invite him to make you strong. *w23.10* 13 ¶6; 14 ¶9

**Monday, June 16**

*The holy spirit makes it clear that the way into the holy place had not yet been revealed while the first tent was standing.—Heb. 9:8.*

The tabernacle and the temples that were built later in Jerusalem had the same basic layout. Inside were two compartments—"the Holy Place" and "the Most Holy"—that were separated by an embroidered curtain. (Heb. 9: 2-5; Ex. 26:31-33) Inside the Holy was a golden lampstand, an altar for burning incense, and a table of showbread. Only "the anointed priests" were allowed inside the Holy to perform their sacred duties. (Num. 3:3, 7, 10) The Most Holy contained the golden ark of the covenant that represented Jehovah's presence. (Ex. 25:21, 22) Only the high priest was allowed to pass beyond the curtain into the Most Holy on the annual Day of Atonement. (Lev. 16:2, 17) He entered with the blood of animals to make atonement for his own sins and for those of the entire nation. Eventually, Jehovah made clear the real significance of these features of the tabernacle. —Heb. 9:6, 7. *w23.10* 27 ¶12

**Tuesday, June 17**

*Love one another.—John 15:17.*

Again and again in God's Word, we find the command to "love one another." (John 15:12; Rom. 13:8; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 John 4:11) However, love is a quality of the heart, or the inner person, and no human can see into our heart. So, then, how can we make our love for one another visible? By our words and actions. There are various ways in which we can show our brothers and sisters that we love them. Here are some examples: "Speak the truth with one another." (Zech. 8:16) "Keep peace with one another." (Mark 9:50) Take the lead "in showing honor to one another." (Rom. 12:10) "Welcome one another." (Rom. 15:7) "Continue . . . forgiving one another." (Col. 3:13) "Go on carrying the burdens of one another." (Gal. 6:2) "Keep comforting one another." (1 Thess. 4:18) "Keep . . . building one another up." (1 Thess. 5:11) "Pray for one another." —Jas. 5:16. *w23.11* 9 ¶7-8

**Wednesday, June 18**

*Rejoice in the hope.—Rom. 12:12.*

Every day, we make decisions that require strong faith. For example, we make decisions involving our associations, entertainment, education, marriage, children, and secular work. We do well to ask ourselves: 'Do my choices show that I am certain that this system is temporary and will soon be replaced by God's new world? Or are my choices influenced by people who live as if death were the end of everything?' (Matt. 6:19, 20; Luke 12:16-21) We will make the best decisions if we strengthen our faith that the new world is close at hand. We also face trials that require strong faith. We may face persecution, chronic illness, or other things that can cause us to become discouraged. At first, we might meet our trial with determination. But if it drags on—as trials often do—we will need strong faith in order to endure and to continue serving Jehovah with joy.—1 Pet. 1: 6, 7. *w23.04* 27 ¶4-5

**Thursday, June 19**

*Pray constantly.—1 Thess. 5:17.*

Jehovah expects us to act in harmony with our prayers. For example, a brother may ask Jehovah to help him get time off from his secular work so that he can attend a regional convention. How might Jehovah answer that prayer? He might give the brother the courage he needs to approach his employer. But the brother will still need to follow through by making the request. He may need to ask repeatedly. He may even offer to trade shifts with another employee or take the time off without pay. Jehovah expects us to pray repeatedly about our concerns. Jesus implied that some of our requests would not be granted right away. (Luke 11:9) So do not give up! Pray earnestly and repeatedly. (Luke 18:1-7) When we do so, we show Jehovah that our request is not just a passing whim. We also demonstrate our faith in his ability to help us. *w23.11* 22 ¶10-11

**Friday, June 20**

*Hope does not lead to disappointment. —Rom. 5:5.*

Jehovah promised his friend Abraham that all nations of the earth would be blessed by means of his offspring. (Gen. 15:5; 22:18) Because Abraham had deep faith in God, he was convinced that God's promise would come true. Even so, when Abraham was 100 years of age and his wife was 90, that faithful couple still did not have a son. (Gen. 21:1-7) Yet, the Bible says: "Based on hope, [Abraham] had faith that he would become the father of many nations according to what had been said." (Rom. 4:18) You know that Abraham's hope was realized. He did become father to the son he had long hoped for, Isaac. What was the basis for Abraham's confidence? Because of his close personal relationship with Jehovah, Abraham was "fully convinced that what [God] had promised" would come true. (Rom. 4:21) Jehovah approved of Abraham and declared him righteous because of his faith.—Jas. 2:23. *w23.12* 8 ¶1-2

**Saturday, June 21**

*The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the person unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much. —Luke 16:10.*

A young man who is reliable diligently cares for all his responsibilities. Consider the perfect example of Jesus. He was never careless or irresponsible. Instead, he fulfilled the assignments that Jehovah gave him, even when it was difficult to do so. He loved people—especially his disciples—and he willingly gave his life for them. (John 13:1) In imitation of Jesus, work hard to fulfill any assignment that you are given. If you are not certain how to do it, be humble and ask for help from mature brothers. Never settle for doing the bare minimum. (Rom. 12:11) Instead, complete your assignment, doing it "for Jehovah, and not for men." (Col. 3: 23) Of course, you are not perfect, so be modest and admit any mistakes you make.—Prov. 11:2. *w23.12* 26 ¶8

**Sunday, June 22**

*Blessed is the man who puts his trust in Jehovah.—Jer. 17:7.*

It is a joy to get baptized and become part of Jehovah's family. Those who are in that privileged position would agree with the psalmist David, who said: "Happy is the one whom you [Jehovah] choose and bring near to reside in your courtyards." (Ps. 65:4) Jehovah does not bring just anyone into his courtyards. He chooses those who prove that they want to have a close relationship with him. (Jas. 4:8) When you dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized, you can be sure that thereafter he will "pour out on you a blessing until there is nothing lacking." (Mal. 3:10; Jer. 17:8) Baptism is just the beginning. You will want to do your best to live up to your dedication vow, even in the face of temptations or tests of faith. (Eccl. 5: 4, 5) As a disciple of Jesus, you will follow Jesus' example and commands as closely as possible.—Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Pet. 2:21. *w24.03* 8 ¶1-3

**Monday, June 23**

*A man will leave his father and his mother and he will stick to his wife.—Gen. 2:24.*

What if you and your spouse do not enjoy spending time together? What can you do? Consider a campfire. It does not start blazing instantly. It needs to be fed slowly with progressively bigger pieces of wood. Similarly, why not start by spending just a few moments together each day? Make sure to do something that you both enjoy. (Jas. 3:18) By starting small, you may begin to rekindle your love. Respect is vital in a marriage. It is like the oxygen that allows a campfire to burn brightly. Without oxygen, a fire quickly goes out. Similarly, without respect, a couple will find that their love can quickly grow cold. On the other hand, a husband and wife who strive to show respect for each other are working to keep their love alive. Yet, bear in mind that it is, not a matter of whether you think that you show respect, but a matter of whether your spouse feels respected. *w23.05* 22 ¶9; 24 ¶14-15

**Tuesday, June 24**

*When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me. —Ps. 94:19.*

In the Bible, faithful servants of God speak of times when they were in distress and trembling because of their enemies or other pressures. (Ps. 18:4; 55:1, 5) Similarly, we could be facing opposition at school, at work, from our family, or from the government. We could even be facing death because of a medical problem. During such times, we may feel as helpless as a small child. How does Jehovah help us in moments like these? He comforts and soothes us. So regularly spend time with Jehovah—praying to him and reading his Word. (Ps. 77: 1, 12-14) Then when you are under stress, your first thought will likely be to turn to your heavenly Father. Share your fears and concerns with Jehovah. Let him talk to you and console you through the Scriptures.—Ps. 119: 28. *w24.01* 24-25 ¶14-16

**Wednesday, June 25**

*God is the one who . . . energizes you, giving you both the desire and the power to act.—Phil. 2:13.*

Motivation plays a key role in reaching spiritual goals. A motivated person has a strong incentive or desire to work toward his goal. And the more motivated we are, the more likely we are to reach our goals. So, what can you do to feel more motivated? Pray for more motivation. By means of his spirit, Jehovah can motivate you to reach your goal. Sometimes we set a goal because we know we should, and that is a good thing. But we may not really have the desire to reach it. Meditate on what Jehovah has done for you. (Ps. 143:5) The apostle Paul meditated on Jehovah's undeserved kindness toward him, and this motivated him to work hard for Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:9, 10; 1 Tim. 1:12-14) Similarly, the more you meditate on what Jehovah has done for you, the more motivated you will feel to reach your goal.—Ps. 116:12. *w23.05* 27 ¶3-5

**Thursday, June 26**

*Praise the name of Jehovah. —Ps. 113:1.*

We please our heavenly Father when we praise his name. (Ps. 119:108) Does this mean, though, that the almighty God is like imperfect humans who crave praise because they are needy or insecure? No. When we praise our heavenly Father, we help to refute a lie that involves us personally. Satan claims that no human will loyally defend God's name. None of us have integrity, according to him. He says that all of us would turn against God if we thought that we would benefit by doing so. (Job 1:9-11; 2:4) But faithful Job proved Satan a liar. What about you? Each of us has the privilege of loyally standing up for our Father's name and of pleasing him by serving him with integrity. (Prov. 27: 11) It is truly an honor to do so. *w24.02* 8-9 ¶3-5

**Friday, June 27**

*Put faith in his prophets, and you will be successful.—2 Chron. 20:20.*

After the days of Moses and Joshua, Jehovah raised up judges to guide his people. Then, during the time of the kings, Jehovah appointed prophets to guide his people. Faithful kings heeded the counsel of the prophets. For example, King David humbly accepted correction from the prophet Nathan. (2 Sam. 12:7, 13; 1 Chron. 17: 3, 4) King Jehoshaphat relied on the prophet Jahaziel for guidance and encouraged the people of Judah to "put faith in [God's] prophets." (2 Chron. 20:14, 15) When in distress, King Hezekiah turned to the prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 37:1-6) Each time the kings followed Jehovah's guidance, they were blessed and the nation was protected. (2 Chron. 20:29, 30; 32:22) It was obvious that Jehovah was using his prophets to guide his people. *w24.02* 21 ¶8

**Saturday, June 28**

*Do not be sharers with them. —Eph. 5:7.*

Satan wants us to associate with people who make it harder for us to stick to Jehovah's standards. We need to remember that our association is not limited to those we spend time with in person. It includes those we interact with on social media. We must fight against the world's thinking that immoral conduct is acceptable. We know better. (Eph. 4:19, 20) We do well to ask ourselves: 'Do I make it a point to avoid all unnecessary association with workmates, classmates, or others who do not respect Jehovah's righteous standards? Do I courageously uphold Jehovah's standards even though some may call me intolerant for doing so?' As indicated at 2 Timothy 2: 20-22, we may also need to be careful when choosing our close associates within the Christian congregation. We bear in mind that some may not help us to remain faithful in our service to Jehovah. *w24.03* 22-23 ¶11-12

**Sunday, June 29**

*Jehovah is very tender in affection. —Jas. 5:11.*

Have you ever tried to imagine what Jehovah is like? Although Jehovah is invisible, the Bible describes him in various ways. Jehovah is called "a sun and a shield" and "a consuming fire." (Ps. 84:11; Heb. 12:29) His presence is described as being similar to a sapphire stone, a glowing metal, and a brilliant rainbow. (Ezek. 1:26-28) Because we cannot see Jehovah, we may find it difficult to believe that he loves us. Some think that Jehovah could never love them because of their past experiences in life. Jehovah understands such feelings and how they affect us. To help us, he reveals his beautiful personality in his Word. The one word that best describes Jehovah is love. (1 John 4:8) Love defines him. It influences everything he does. God's love is so warm and so powerful that he even extends it to those who do not love him.—Matt. 5:44, 45. *w24.01* 26 ¶1-3

**Monday, June 30**

*He would speak to them from the pillar of cloud.—Ps. 99:7.*

Jehovah appointed Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, and as visible evidence He provided a pillar of cloud by day and one of fire by night. (Ex. 13:21) Moses followed the pillar, which led him and the Israelites to the Red Sea. The people panicked when they thought that they were trapped between the sea and the pursuing Egyptian army. But it was no mistake. Jehovah had intentionally led his people there by means of Moses. (Ex. 14:2) God then delivered them in a most astonishing way. (Ex. 14:26-28) For 40 years thereafter, Moses continued to depend on the pillar of cloud to guide God's people through the wilderness. (Ex. 33:7, 9, 10) From the pillar Jehovah spoke to Moses, who in turn conveyed His instructions to the people. The Israelites had ample evidence that Jehovah was using Moses to guide them. *w24.02* 21 ¶4-5

**Tuesday, July 1**

*He went through the land doing good and healing.—Acts 10:38.*

All that Jesus said and did, including the miracles he performed, perfectly reflected his Father's thinking and feelings. (John 14:9) What can we learn from Jesus' miracles? Jesus and his Father deeply love us. While on earth, Jesus showed the depth of his love for people by using his miraculous power to ease their suffering. On one occasion, two blind men cried out to him for help. (Matt. 20:30-34) Notice that Jesus was "moved with pity" and then he healed them. As used here, the Greek verb translated "moved with pity" refers to an intense compassion felt deep inside the body. Such deep compassion, which is an expression of love, also moved Jesus to feed the hungry and to cure a leper. (Matt. 15:32; Mark 1:41) We can be sure that Jehovah, the God of "tender compassion," and his Son deeply love us and are pained by our suffering. (Luke 1:78; 1 Pet. 5:7) How they must long to remove all the woes that afflict humankind! *w23.04* 3 ¶4-5

**Wednesday, July 2**

*O you who love Jehovah, hate what is bad. He is guarding the lives of his loyal ones; he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.—Ps. 97:10.*

We can take practical steps to minimize our exposure to the wrong thinking and ideas popular in Satan's system. We can fill our mind with wholesome thoughts by reading and studying the Bible. Attending meetings and taking part in the ministry will also safeguard our thinking. Jehovah, in turn, promises that he will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. (1 Cor. 10:12, 13) Each of us needs to pray more than ever to remain faithful to Jehovah during these difficult last days. Jehovah wants us to 'pour out our hearts before him' in prayer. (Ps. 62:8) Praise Jehovah and thank him for all that he does. Ask him to help you to be courageous in the ministry. Beg him for help to deal with any problems and to resist any temptation that you may be facing. Do not let anything or anyone stop you from regularly praying to Jehovah. *w23.05* 7 ¶17-18

**Thursday, July 3**

*Let us consider one another . . . , encouraging one another.*
*—Heb. 10:24, 25.*

Why do we attend congregation meetings? Primarily, to praise Jehovah. (Ps. 26:12; 111:1) We also attend meetings so that we can encourage one another during these difficult times. (1 Thess. 5:11) When we raise our hand and give a comment, we contribute toward both of these objectives. But when commenting, we may face challenges. We may feel anxious about commenting, or we may keenly desire to participate but are not called on as often as we would like. How can we deal with these challenges? The apostle Paul said that we should focus on "encouraging one another." When we realize that others in the audience can be encouraged by even a simple expression of our faith, we will feel better about volunteering to comment. And if we are not called on often, we can be happy that others in the congregation will have the opportunity to comment.—1 Pet. 3:8. *w23.04* 20 ¶1-3

**Friday, July 4**

*Go up to Jerusalem, . . . and rebuild the house of Jehovah.—Ezra 1:3.*

The word had gone out! The Jews, who had been captives in Babylon for some 70 years, were free to return to their homeland, Israel. (Ezra 1:2-4) Only Jehovah could have accomplished this. Babylon would not normally release its captives. (Isa. 14: 4, 17) But Babylon had been overthrown, and the new ruler had told the Jews that they could leave. Every Jew, especially family heads, faced a decision: to leave Babylon or to stay behind. That decision might not have been an easy one to make. Old age prevented many from risking the hardships of the trip. And since most of the Jews had been born in Babylon, it was the only home they had ever known. To them, Israel was the land of their ancestors. Some Jews had apparently become very successful in Babylon, so they may have found it hard to leave their comfortable homes or their businesses and settle in an unfamiliar land. *w23.05* 14 ¶1-2

**Saturday, July 5**

*Prove yourselves ready.*
*—Matt. 24:44.*

God's Word encourages us to keep cultivating endurance, compassion, and love. Luke 21:19 says: "By your endurance you will preserve your lives." Colossians 3:12 states: "Clothe yourselves with . . . compassion." And 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10 says: "You yourselves are taught by God to love one another. . . . But we urge you, brothers, to go on doing so in fuller measure." All these verses were addressed to disciples who had already shown endurance, compassion, and love. Yet, they had to continue developing these qualities. We must do the same. To help you, consider how the early Christians demonstrated these qualities. Then you will see how you can imitate those disciples and, as a result, prove yourself ready for the great tribulation. Then when the great tribulation begins, you will have learned how to endure and you will be determined to continue to endure. *w23.07* 3 ¶4, 8

**Sunday, July 6**

*A highway will be there, . . . the Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35:8.*

Whether we are of the anointed or of the "other sheep," we need to remain on "the Way of Holiness" as it takes us through the spiritual paradise and leads us to future Kingdom blessings. (John 10:16) Since 1919 C.E., millions of men, women, and children have left Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, and have begun traveling on that figurative road. When the Jews left Babylon, Jehovah saw to it that obstacles in their way were removed. (Isa. 57:14) What about the modern-day "Way of Holiness"? For many centuries leading up to 1919, Jehovah used God-fearing men to help clear the way out of Babylon the Great. (Compare Isaiah 40:3.) They did necessary preparatory work—spiritual roadwork—to make it possible later for righthearted people to leave Babylon the Great and enter the spiritual paradise, where pure worship of Jehovah had been restored. *w23.05* 15-16 ¶8-9

**Monday, July 7**

*Serve Jehovah with rejoicing. Come into his presence with joyful shouting. —Ps. 100:2.*

Jehovah wants us to serve him happily and willingly. (2 Cor. 9:7) So should we keep working toward a spiritual goal if we do not feel like it? Consider the apostle Paul's example. He said: "I strictly discipline my body and lead it as a slave." (1 Cor. 9:25-27, ftn.) Paul forced himself to do what was right even when he may have felt inclined to do otherwise. Did Jehovah approve of Paul's service? Definitely! And Jehovah rewarded him for his efforts. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8) Similarly, Jehovah is pleased to see us working toward our goal even when we do not feel motivated to do so. He is pleased because although we may not always be doing it out of love for that activity, he knows that we are doing it out of love for him. Just as Jehovah blessed Paul, He will bless us for our efforts. (Ps. 126:5) And as we experience Jehovah's blessing, we may even start to feel motivated. *w23.05* 29 ¶9-10

**Tuesday, July 8**

*Jehovah's day is coming. —1 Thess. 5:2.*

The apostle Paul compared those who will not survive Jehovah's day to people who are asleep. They are unaware of their surroundings or the passing of time. Hence, they cannot discern important developments or respond to them. Most people today are asleep in a spiritual sense. (Rom. 11:8) They are indifferent to evidence that we are living in "the last days" and that the great tribulation will come soon. (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) However, we recognize that the inspired counsel to stay awake becomes more urgent with each passing day. (1 Thess. 5:6) Therefore, we must keep calm and steady. Why? So that we do not get caught up in today's political or social issues. The pressure to take sides in these matters will increase as Jehovah's day draws closer. Still, we need not be anxious about how we will respond. God's spirit can help us to have a calm and steady state of mind and to make wise decisions.—Luke 12:11, 12. *w23.06* 10 ¶6-7

**Wednesday, July 9**

*Sovereign Lord Jehovah, remember me, please, and strengthen me. —Judg. 16:28.*

What comes to your mind when you hear the name Samson? You likely think of a man of outstanding strength. That is true. But Samson made a bad decision that led to painful results. Still, Jehovah focused on Samson's overall record of faithfulness, which He included in the Bible for our benefit. Jehovah used Samson to accomplish amazing things to help His chosen people, Israel. Centuries after Samson's death, Jehovah inspired the apostle Paul to include Samson's name in a list of outstanding men of faith. (Heb. 11:32-34) Samson's example can encourage us. He relied on Jehovah, even during challenging circumstances. We can draw encouragement as well as learn other practical lessons from his example. *w23.09* 2 ¶1-2

**Thursday, July 10**

*Let your petitions be made known to God.—Phil. 4:6.*

We can build up our endurance by frequently and earnestly sharing our concerns with Jehovah. (1 Thess. 5:17) Perhaps you are not facing a severe trial right now. Even so, do you seek Jehovah's guidance whenever you feel upset, confused, or overwhelmed? If you regularly turn to our God for help with your day-to-day challenges now, you will not hesitate to do so when you face bigger challenges in the future. You will then be confident that he knows precisely when and how to act in your behalf. (Ps. 27:1, 3) We are more likely to endure the future great tribulation if we endure trials today. (Rom. 5:3) Why can we say that? Many brothers have found that each test of faith that they endured helped them withstand the next challenge. Endurance refined them, strengthening their faith that Jehovah is ready and willing to help. Faith, in turn, helped them endure the next trial.—Jas. 1:2-4. *w23.07* 3 ¶7-8

**Friday, July 11**

*I will . . . show you consideration. —Gen. 19:21.*

Jehovah's humility and compassion move him to be reasonable. For example, Jehovah's humility was evident when he was about to destroy the wicked people of Sodom. Through his angels, Jehovah instructed righteous Lot to flee to the mountainous region. Lot was afraid to go there. So he pleaded that he and his family be allowed to take refuge in Zoar, a small town that was slated for destruction. Jehovah could have insisted that Lot follow His instructions to the letter. Instead, he granted Lot's request, even though it meant sparing Zoar. (Gen. 19:18-22) Centuries later, Jehovah showed compassion toward the inhabitants of Nineveh. He sent the prophet Jonah to announce the imminent destruction of the city and its wicked inhabitants. But when the Ninevites repented, Jehovah felt sorry for them and spared the city.—Jonah 3:1, 10; 4:10, 11. *w23.07* 21 ¶5

**Saturday, July 12**

*They killed* [*Jehoash*] . . . , *but they did not bury him in the burial places of the kings.—2 Chron. 24:25.*

What can we learn from the example of Jehoash? He was like a tree with shallow roots that depended on the support of a stake. When the stake —Jehoiada—was gone and the winds of apostasy blew, Jehoash toppled over. This powerfully illustrates that our fear of God must not depend solely on the good influence of fellow Christians, including family members. To remain spiritually strong, we must strengthen our own godly devotion and fear through regular study, meditation, and prayer. (Jer. 17:7, 8; Col 2:6, 7) Jehovah does not really ask much of us. What he requires is summed up at Ecclesiastes 12:13, which says: "Fear the true God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole obligation of man." When we fear God, we will be able to face future tests and stand firm. Nothing will be able to damage our friendship with Jehovah. *w23.06* 19 ¶17-19

**Sunday, July 13**

*Look! I am making all things new. —Rev. 21:5.*

God's guarantee begins with the introduction: "The One seated on the throne said." (Rev. 21:5a) These words introduce one of only three instances in the book of Revelation when Jehovah speaks in the visions. So this guarantee is provided, not by a powerful angel, not even by the resurrected Jesus, but by Jehovah himself! This fact highlights the trustworthiness of the words that follow. Why is that so? Because Jehovah "cannot lie." (Titus 1:2) That statement makes the words that we read at Revelation 21:5, 6 completely reliable. Consider the word "Look!" The Greek term translated "look!" is used repeatedly in the book of Revelation. What follows the exclamation? God's statement: "I am making all things new." True, Jehovah is speaking about future changes, but for him this promise is so certain to come true that he speaks of these changes as if they were already taking place.—Isa. 46:10. *w23.11* 3-4 ¶7-8

**Monday, July 14**

*He went outside and wept bitterly. —Matt. 26:75.*

The apostle Peter struggled with his weaknesses. Consider a few examples. When Jesus explained how he would suffer and die in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, Peter rebuked him. (Mark 8:31-33) Repeatedly, Peter and the other apostles argued about who was the greatest. (Mark 9:33, 34) On the last night before Jesus' death, Peter impulsively cut off a man's ear. (John 18:10) That same night, Peter gave in to fear and three times denied knowing his friend Jesus. (Mark 14:66-72) That led Peter to weep bitterly. Jesus did not give up on his disheartened apostle. After Jesus was resurrected, he gave Peter the opportunity to reaffirm his love for him. Jesus invited Peter to serve humbly as a shepherd of his sheep. (John 21:15-17) Peter responded positively. He was in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and among the first to be anointed by holy spirit. *w23.09* 22 ¶6-7

**Tuesday, July 15**

*Shepherd my little sheep.*
*—John 21:16.*

"Shepherd the flock of God," the apostle Peter urged his fellow elders. (1 Pet. 5:1-4) If you are an elder, we know that you love your brothers and sisters and want to shepherd them. However, you may at times feel that you are so busy or so tired that you cannot fulfill that assignment. What can you do? Pour out your concerns to Jehovah. Peter wrote: "If anyone ministers, let him do so as depending on the strength that God supplies." (1 Pet. 4:11) Your brothers and sisters may be facing problems that cannot be fully solved in this system of things. But remember that "the chief shepherd," Jesus Christ, can help them beyond what you can do. He can do so both today and in the new world. God asks elders simply to love their brothers, to shepherd their brothers, and to become "examples to the flock." *w23.09* 29-30 ¶13-14

**Wednesday, July 16**

*Jehovah knows that the reasonings of the wise men are futile.—1 Cor. 3:20.*

We must avoid resorting to using human reasoning. If we look at matters from a human standpoint, we may leave out Jehovah and his standards. (1 Cor. 3:19) "The wisdom of this world" often appeals to fleshly desires. A few Christians in Pergamum and Thyatira adopted the idolatrous and immoral views common in those cities. Jesus sent strong counsel to both congregations for their toleration of sexual immorality. (Rev. 2:14, 20) Today, we face pressure to adopt wrong viewpoints. Family members and acquaintances may appeal to our emotions and encourage us to compromise. For example, they may claim that giving in to our desires does not matter and that the Bible's moral standards are outdated. At times, we might reason that the direction Jehovah gives us is not sufficient. We might even be tempted to "go beyond the things that are written."—1 Cor. 4:6. *w23.07* 16 ¶10-11

**Thursday, July 17**

*A true friend shows love at all times and is a brother who is born for times of distress.—Prov. 17:17.*

Mary, the mother of Jesus, needed strength. She was not married; yet, she was to become pregnant. She had no experience raising children of her own, but she was to care for the boy who would become the Messiah. And since she had never had sexual relations, how would Mary explain all of this to her fiancé, Joseph? (Luke 1: 26-33) How did Mary receive the strength? She sought help from others. For example, she asked Gabriel to provide further information concerning the assignment. (Luke 1:34) Shortly thereafter, she traveled all the way to "the mountainous country" of Judah to visit her relative Elizabeth. Elizabeth commended Mary and was inspired by Jehovah to share an encouraging prophecy about Mary's unborn son. (Luke 1:39-45) Mary said that Jehovah had "acted mightily with his arm." (Luke 1:46-51) Through Gabriel and Elizabeth, Jehovah strengthened Mary. *w23.10* 14-15 ¶10-12

**Friday, July 18**

*He made us to be a kingdom, priests to his God and Father.—Rev. 1:6.*

A limited number of Christ's disciples have been anointed with holy spirit, and they enjoy a special relationship with Jehovah. These 144,000 are to serve as priests in the heavens with Jesus. (Rev. 14:1) The Holy of the tabernacle represents their spirit-begotten condition while on earth as sons of God. (Rom. 8:15-17) The Most Holy of the tabernacle represents heaven, where Jehovah dwells. "The curtain" that separated the Holy from the Most Holy represents Jesus' fleshly body that was a barrier to his entering heaven as the great High Priest of the spiritual temple. By giving up his human body as a sacrifice for mankind, Jesus opened up the way to heavenly life for all anointed Christians. They must also give up their fleshly body to receive their heavenly reward.—Heb. 10:19, 20; 1 Cor. 15:50. *w23.10* 28 ¶13

**Saturday, July 19**

*Time will fail me if I go on to relate about Gideon.—Heb. 11:32.*

Gideon responded mildly when the Ephraimites criticized him. (Judg. 8: 1-3) He did not reply in anger. He showed lowliness of mind by listening to their concerns, and he tactfully defused the tense situation. Wise elders imitate Gideon by listening carefully and responding mildly if criticized. (Jas. 3:13) They thus contribute to the peace in the congregation. When Gideon was honored for the victory over Midian, he focused the attention on Jehovah. (Judg. 8:22, 23) How might appointed men imitate Gideon? They can credit Jehovah for what they accomplish. (1 Cor. 4:6, 7) For example, if an elder is commended for his teaching ability, he can direct attention to the source of the instruction, God's Word, or to the training we receive from Jehovah's organization. Elders might at times reflect on whether they are drawing undue attention to themselves. *w23.06* 4 ¶7-8

**Sunday, July 20**

*My thoughts are not your thoughts. —Isa. 55:8.*

If we do not receive what we asked for in prayer, we might ask ourselves, 'Am I praying for the right thing?' Often, we think that we know what is best for us. But the things we ask for may not benefit us in the long run. If we are praying about a problem, there may be a better solution to the problem than the one we are asking for. And some things we ask for may not be in harmony with Jehovah's will. (1 John 5:14) For instance, consider the example of parents who asked Jehovah to keep their child in the truth. That seems like an appropriate request. Yet, Jehovah will not force any of us to serve him. He wants all of us, including our children, to choose to worship him. (Deut. 10:12, 13; 30: 19, 20) So the parents could instead ask Jehovah to help them reach their child's heart so that he will be moved to love Jehovah and to become His friend.—Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4. *w23.11* 21 ¶5; 23 ¶12

**Monday, July 21**

*Keep comforting one another.*
*—1 Thess. 4:18.*

Why is giving comfort to others an important expression of our love? According to a Bible reference work, the word that Paul used for "comfort" means "standing beside a person to encourage him when he is undergoing severe testing." Thus, by giving comfort, we help a fellow believer who is in distress to get up and to continue walking on the road to life. Each time we offer a brother or a sister a shoulder to cry on, we express our love for our fellow believer. (2 Cor. 7:6, 7, 13) Feeling compassion and giving comfort are closely related. In what way? A compassionate person is moved to comfort others and to try to relieve their suffering. So first we feel compassion; then we give comfort. Note how Paul connects Jehovah's compassion to the comfort He gives. Paul describes Jehovah as "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort."—2 Cor. 1:3. *w23.11* 9-10 ¶8-10

**Tuesday, July 22**

*Rejoice while in tribulations.*
*—Rom. 5:3.*

All followers of Christ can expect tribulation. Consider the apostle Paul's example. He said to those in Thessalonica: "When we were with you, we used to tell you in advance that we would suffer tribulation, and that is what has happened." (1 Thess. 3:4) And to the Corinthians, he wrote: "We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the tribulation we experienced . . . We were very uncertain even of our lives." (2 Cor. 1:8; 11:23-27) Christians today, too, can expect tribulation of some sort. (2 Tim. 3:12) As you put faith in Jesus and follow him, friends and relatives may be hostile. Has your determination to be honest in all things created problems for you at work? (Heb. 13:18) Have you faced governmental opposition because you shared your hope with others? No matter what type of tribulation we may encounter, though, Paul says we should rejoice. *w23.12* 10-11 ¶9-10

**Wednesday, July 23**

*You have brought great trouble on me.*
*—Gen. 34:30.*

Jacob endured many problems. Two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, brought disgrace on the family and reproach on Jehovah's name. In addition, Jacob's beloved wife, Rachel, died while giving birth to their second child. And because of a severe famine, Jacob was forced to move to the land of Egypt in his old age. (Gen. 35:16-19; 37:28; 45:9-11, 28) Through it all, Jacob never lost faith in Jehovah and in His promises. In turn, Jehovah showed Jacob that he had His favor. For example, Jehovah blessed Jacob materially. And just think of how grateful Jacob must have been to Jehovah when he was reunited with Joseph—the son whom he had long thought to be dead! Jacob's close friendship with Jehovah enabled him to face his trials successfully. (Gen. 30:43; 32:9, 10; 46:28-30) When we maintain a close friendship with Jehovah, we too can successfully deal with unexpected trials. *w23.04* 15 ¶6-7

**Thursday, July 24**

*Jehovah is my Shepherd. I will lack nothing.—Ps. 23:1.*

Psalm 23 is a song that expresses confidence in Jehovah's love and tender care. David, the writer of this psalm, describes the strong bond that existed between him and his Shepherd, Jehovah. David felt safe letting Jehovah direct him, and he was totally dependent on Him. David knew that Jehovah's love would pursue him all the days of his life. What made him so confident? David felt well cared for because Jehovah's provisions had been constant. David also enjoyed Jehovah's friendship and favor. That is why he was sure that no matter what the future would bring, Jehovah would continue to care for all his needs. David's trust in Jehovah's tender love was more powerful than any of his worries and gave him deep happiness and satisfaction.—Ps. 16:11. *w24.01* 29 ¶12-13

**Friday, July 25**

*I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things. —Matt. 28:20.*

Since World War II, Jehovah's people in many lands have enjoyed a measure of peace and freedom while carrying out the preaching work. In fact, the work has flourished. Today the members of the Governing Body continue to look to Christ for guidance. They want the instructions they give to the brothers to reflect heaven's view of matters. In turn, circuit overseers and elders provide direction to the congregations. Anointed elders are in Christ's "right hand." (Rev. 2:1) Of course, these elders are imperfect and make mistakes. Moses and Joshua erred at times, as did the apostles. (Num. 20:12; Josh. 9:14, 15; Rom. 3:23) Still, Christ is carefully guiding the faithful slave and the appointed elders, and he will continue to do so. We therefore have every reason to trust the guidance that he is providing through those appointed to take the lead. *w24.02* 23-24 ¶13-14

**Saturday, July 26**

*Become imitators of God, as beloved children.—Eph. 5:1.*

Today we can please Jehovah by speaking about him with warmth, gratitude, and love. When we are in the ministry, we keep in mind that our main objective is to draw people to Jehovah, to help them to see our beloved Father as we do. (Jas. 4:8) We are delighted to show people how the Bible describes Jehovah, revealing his love, justice, wisdom, power, and other appealing qualities. We also praise Jehovah and please him by striving to imitate him. When we do so, we stand out in this wicked world. People may notice that we are different and may wonder why. (Matt. 5:14-16) As we interact with them in our day-to-day life, we may be able to explain why we act as we do. As a result, sincere ones feel drawn to our God. When we praise Jehovah in these ways, we bring delight to his heart.—1 Tim. 2: 3, 4. *w24.02* 10 ¶7

**Sunday, July 27**

*Be able both to encourage . . . and to reprove.—Titus 1:9.*

To become a mature Christian man, you will need to develop practical skills. These will help you to shoulder responsibilities in the congregation, to hold a secular job to support yourself or a family, and to have healthy relationships with others. For example, learn to read and write well. The Bible says that a happy and successful man spends time each day reading God's Word and meditating on it. (Ps. 1:1-3) By reading the Bible daily, he will get to know Jehovah's way of thinking, which will help him to think clearly and to reason well. (Prov. 1: 3, 4) Our brothers and sisters look to capable men for Bible-based instruction and advice. If you can read and write well, you will be able to prepare informative, faith-strengthening talks and comments. You will also be able to take meaningful notes that will help you to build your own faith and to encourage others. *w23.12* 26-27 ¶9-11

**Monday, July 28**

*The one who is in union with you is greater than the one who is in union with the world.—1 John 4:4.*

When you feel afraid, meditate on what Jehovah will do in the future when Satan is gone. A demonstration on the 2014 regional convention program depicted a father discussing with his family how 2 Timothy 3:1-5 might be worded if those verses foretold what it would be like in Paradise: "In the new world the happiest of times will be here. For men will be lovers of others, lovers of spiritual treasures, modest, humble, praisers of God, obedient to parents, thankful, loyal, having great affection for their families, open to agreement, always speaking well of others, self-controlled, mild, lovers of goodness, trustworthy, yielding, lowly in mind, lovers of God rather than lovers of pleasures, motivated by genuine godly devotion; and to these people stick closely." Do you discuss with your family or fellow believers what life will be like in the new world? *w24.01* 6 ¶13-14

**Tuesday, July 29**

*I have approved you.—Luke 3:22.*

How reassuring it is to know that Jehovah approves of his people as a group! The Bible says: "Jehovah takes pleasure in his people." (Ps. 149:4) At times, however, some get so discouraged that they may wonder, 'Does Jehovah approve of me personally?' A number of Jehovah's faithful worshippers in Bible times had moments when they struggled with such thoughts. (1 Sam. 1:6-10; Job 29:2, 4; Ps. 51:11) The Bible clearly shows that imperfect humans can gain Jehovah's approval, or goodwill. How? We must exercise faith in Jesus Christ and get baptized. (John 3:16) We thus demonstrate publicly that we have repented of our sins and made a promise to God to do his will. (Acts 2:38; 3: 19) Jehovah is delighted when we take these steps to cultivate a relationship with him. As long as we continue to do our best to live up to our dedication vow, Jehovah approves of us and considers us his close friends.—Ps. 25: 14. *w24.03* 26 ¶1-2

**Wednesday, July 30**

*We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard. —Acts 4:20.*

We can imitate the disciples by continuing to preach even when secular authorities demand that we stop. We can be confident that Jehovah will help us to accomplish our ministry. So pray for boldness and wisdom as well as for Jehovah's help to deal with problems. Many of us are coping with physical or emotional challenges, the loss of a loved one, a difficult family situation, persecution, or some other problem. And such things as pandemics and wars have made many of these challenges even harder to deal with. Pour out your heart to Jehovah. Tell him about your situation just as you would tell a close friend. Be assured that Jehovah "will act in your behalf." (Ps. 37:3, 5) Persevering in prayer will help us to "endure under tribulation." (Rom. 12:12) Jehovah knows what his worshippers are going through—"he hears their cry for help."—Ps. 145:18, 19. *w23.05* 5-6 ¶12-15

**Thursday, July 31**

*Keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord. —Eph. 5:10.*

When we have important decisions to make, we need to perceive "what the will of Jehovah is" and then act in harmony with it. (Eph. 5:17) By identifying Bible principles that apply to our situation, we are actually seeking God's thinking on the matter. Then as we apply his principles, we will more likely make good decisions. "The wicked one," our enemy Satan, would like to keep us so busy with this world's pursuits that we have no time for our service to God. (1 John 5:19) It would be all too easy for a Christian to put material possessions, secular education, or his career ahead of opportunities to serve Jehovah. Were that to happen, it would indicate that he is being affected by the world's thinking. Of course, these things are not wrong in themselves, but they should never take first place in our life. *w24.03* 24 ¶16-17

**Friday, August 1**

*Many are the hardships of the righteous one, but Jehovah rescues him from them all.—Ps. 34:19.*

Note two important points in the above psalm: (1) Righteous people face problems. (2) Jehovah delivers us from our trials. How does Jehovah deliver us? One way is by helping us to have a realistic view of life in this system of things. While Jehovah does promise that we will have joy in serving him, he does not guarantee a worry-free life now. (Isa. 66:14) He urges us to focus on our future—the time when we will have the life that he wants us to enjoy forever. (2 Cor. 4:16-18) In the meantime, he helps us to keep going each day. (Lam. 3:22-24) What can we learn from the examples of faithful worshippers of Jehovah, both in Bible times and in our day? We may face unexpected problems. But when we lean on Jehovah, he will never fail to sustain us.—Ps. 55:22. *w23.04* 14-15 ¶3-4

**Saturday, August 2**

*Be in subjection to the superior authorities.—Rom. 13:1.*

We can learn from the examples of Joseph and Mary, who were ready to obey the superior authorities even when it was inconvenient. (Luke 2:1-6) When Mary was about nine months pregnant, she and Joseph faced a test of obedience. Augustus, who ruled the Roman Empire, called for a census. Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem, a journey of up to 150 kilometers (93 mi) through hilly country. That trip would be uncomfortable, especially for Mary. The couple may have worried about her safety and that of their unborn baby. What if she were to go into labor while traveling? She was carrying the future Messiah in her womb. Would that excuse them from obeying the government? Joseph and Mary did not allow any of those concerns to influence whether they would obey the law. Jehovah blessed their obedience. Mary arrived safely in Bethlehem, gave birth to a healthy baby, and even helped to fulfill Bible prophecy!—Mic. 5:2. *w23.10* 8 ¶9; 9 ¶11-12

**Sunday, August 3**

[*Encourage*] *one another. —Heb. 10:25.*

What if the very thought of commenting at meetings makes you nervous? You may find it helpful to prepare well. (Prov. 21:5) The more familiar you are with the material, the more at ease you will feel about volunteering to comment. Also, make your comments brief. (Prov. 15:23; 17:27) A short answer gives you less to worry about. By making a brief comment in your own words, you will show that you have prepared well and that you have a clear understanding of the material. What if you try some of these suggestions but still feel too anxious to comment more than once or twice? Be assured that Jehovah will appreciate your sincere efforts to do what you can. (Luke 21:1-4) Giving your best does not mean putting an unbearable strain on yourself. (Phil. 4:5) Determine what you can do, set a goal to do it, and pray for a calm heart. Initially, that goal may be to make one brief comment. *w23.04* 21 ¶6-8

**Monday, August 4**

*Put on the breastplate . . . and the . . . helmet.—1 Thess. 5:8.*

The apostle Paul compares us to soldiers who are alert and dressed for battle. A soldier on active duty is expected to be prepared for battle at all times. It is similar with us. We remain ready for Jehovah's day by wearing a breastplate of faith and love and a helmet of hope. A breastplate protected a soldier's heart. Faith and love protect our figurative heart. They will help us to keep serving God and following Jesus. Faith assures us that Jehovah will reward us for seeking him with all our heart. (Heb. 11:6) It will move us to remain loyal to our Leader, Jesus, even if we have to endure hardships. We can build the faith to face life's challenges by noting modern-day examples of individuals who maintained integrity despite persecution or economic hardship. And we can avoid the snare of materialism by imitating ones who simplified their life to put Kingdom interests first. *w23.06* 10 ¶8-9

**Tuesday, August 5**

*The one who looks at the clouds will not reap.—Eccl. 11:4.*

Self-control is the ability to control one's feelings and actions. It is required in order to move us to reach our goals, especially if a goal is difficult to reach or if we do not feel motivated. Remember, self-control is part of the fruitage of the spirit, so ask Jehovah for holy spirit to help you cultivate that important quality. (Luke 11:13; Gal. 5:22, 23) Do not wait for perfect circumstances. In this world, we will likely never have ideal circumstances. If we wait for them, we may never reach our goal. We may lack motivation because our goal seems very hard to achieve. If this is true in your case, could you break down your goal into smaller ones? If your goal is to cultivate a quality, why not first work on displaying it in small ways? If your goal is to read the entire Bible, could you start by scheduling shorter periods of reading time? *w23.05* 29 ¶11-13

**Wednesday, August 6**

*The path of the righteous is like the bright morning light that grows brighter and brighter until full daylight.—Prov. 4:18.*

Throughout the last days, Jehovah has used his organization to provide a steady flow of spiritual food to help all of us to keep traveling on "the Way of Holiness." (Isa. 35:8; 48:17; 60:17) We might say that whenever someone accepts a Bible study, he has an opportunity to step onto "the Way of Holiness." Some travel only a short distance and then leave the highway. Others are determined to keep traveling on it until they reach their destination. What is that destination? For those with a heavenly hope, "the Way of Holiness" leads to "the paradise of God" in heaven. (Rev. 2:7) For those with an earthly hope, that highway leads to perfection at the end of the 1,000 years. If you are traveling on that highway today, do not look back. And do not leave it until you have completed your journey to the new world! *w23.05* 17 ¶15; 19 ¶16-18

**Thursday, August 7**

*We love, because he first loved us. —1 John 4:19.*

The decision to dedicate yourself to Jehovah is only natural when you think of all that he has done for you. (Ps. 116:12-14) The Bible rightly calls Jehovah the Giver of "every good gift and every perfect present." (Jas. 1:17) The greatest of those gifts is the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. Just think! The ransom has made it possible for you to have a close relationship with Jehovah. And he has given you the prospect of living forever. (1 John 4:9, 10) Dedicating yourself to Jehovah is a way to show your appreciation for that greatest expression of love ever made, along with all the other blessings Jehovah has given you.—Deut. 16:17; 2 Cor. 5:15. *w24.03* 5 ¶8

**Friday, August 8**

*The one walking in his uprightness fears Jehovah.—Prov. 14:2.*

Regarding the moral standards promoted by this world, we feel as did righteous Lot. He "was greatly distressed by the brazen conduct of the lawless people," knowing that our heavenly Father hates bad conduct. (2 Pet. 2:7, 8) Fear of God and love for him moved Lot to reject the low moral standards of the people around him. We too are surrounded by people who have little or no respect for Jehovah's moral standards. Despite that, we can remain morally clean if we maintain our love for God and cultivate a healthy fear of him. To that end, Jehovah provides loving encouragement and motivation by means of the book of Proverbs. All Christians, men and women, young and old, can truly benefit from considering the wise counsel found there. When we fear Jehovah, we are careful not to excuse bad behavior. *w23.06* 20 ¶1-2; 21 ¶5

**Saturday, August 9**

*If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake day after day and keep following me.—Luke 9:23.*

Perhaps you have faced opposition from family members, or perhaps you have sacrificed certain material pursuits to put Kingdom interests first. (Matt. 6:33) If so, you can be certain that Jehovah has noticed your faithful works. (Heb. 6:10) Likely, you have experienced the truthfulness of Jesus' words: "No one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news who will not get 100 times more now in this period of time—houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the coming system of things, everlasting life." (Mark 10:29, 30) The blessings that you have received are truly greater than any sacrifices that you have made.—Ps. 37:4. *w24.03* 9 ¶5

**Sunday, August 10**

*A true friend shows love at all times, and is a brother who is born for times of distress.—Prov. 17:17.*

When Christians in Judea experienced a great famine, the brothers in the congregation in Antioch were "determined, each according to what he could afford, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea." (Acts 11:27-30) Although the brothers affected by the famine lived some distance away, the Christians in Antioch were determined to help them. (1 John 3:17, 18) We too can show compassion today when we learn that fellow worshippers have been affected by a disaster. We readily respond—perhaps by asking the elders if we can assist on a project, by donating to the worldwide work, or by praying for those affected by the disaster. Our brothers and sisters may also need help to meet their basic needs. When our King, Christ Jesus, comes to execute judgment, may he find us showing compassion and invite us to "inherit the Kingdom."—Matt. 25:34-40. *w23.07* 4 ¶9-10; 6 ¶12

**Monday, August 11**

*Let your reasonableness become known to all men.—Phil. 4:5.*

Jesus imitated Jehovah's reasonableness. He was sent to earth to preach to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But he showed reasonableness in carrying out that assignment. On one occasion, a non-Israelite woman begged him to heal her daughter who was "cruelly demon possessed." Jesus compassionately did as the woman asked and healed her daughter. (Matt. 15:21-28) Consider another example. Earlier in his ministry, Jesus declared: "Whoever disowns me . . . , I will also disown him." (Matt. 10:33) But did he disown Peter, who denied him three times? No. Jesus took into account Peter's repentance and faith. After being resurrected, Jesus appeared to Peter and very likely assured him of his forgiveness and love. (Luke 24: 33, 34) Both Jehovah God and Jesus Christ are reasonable. What about us? Jehovah expects us to be reasonable. *w23.07* 21 ¶6-7

**Tuesday, August 12**

*Death will be no more.—Rev. 21:4.*

What assurances can we share with those who doubt that God's promise of Paradise will come true? First, Jehovah himself makes the promise. The book of Revelation states: "The One seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.'" He has the wisdom, the power, and the desire to make his promise come true. Second, the fulfillment of his promise is so certain that from Jehovah's viewpoint, it has already happened. He rightly says: "These words are faithful and true. . . . They have come to pass!" Third, when Jehovah starts something, he brings it to its successful conclusion, as confirmed by the expression: "I am the Alpha and the Omega." (Rev. 21:6) Jehovah will prove that Satan is a liar and a failure. So when someone says, "This sounds too good to be true," read and explain Revelation 21:5, 6. Show how Jehovah has guaranteed his promise by signing it, as it were, with his own signature. —Isa. 65:16. *w23.11* 7 ¶18-19

**Wednesday, August 13**

*I will make you a great nation. —Gen. 12:2.*

Jehovah made that promise to Abraham when he was a childless 75-year-old man. Did Abraham see that promise fulfilled? Not completely. After crossing the Euphrates River and waiting 25 years, Abraham did see the miraculous birth of his son Isaac, and after another 60 years, his grandsons Esau and Jacob were born. (Heb. 6: 15) But Abraham never saw his descendants become a great nation and inherit the Promised Land. However, that faithful man did enjoy a close friendship with his Creator. (Jas. 2: 23) And when Abraham is resurrected, how thrilled he will be to learn that his faith and patience resulted in blessings for all nations! (Gen. 22: 18) What is the lesson? We personally may not see all of Jehovah's promises fulfilled right away. However, if we are patient like Abraham, we can be sure that Jehovah will reward us now and even more so in His promised new world.—Mark 10:29, 30. *w23.08* 24 ¶14

**Thursday, August 14**

*During the time he was searching for Jehovah, the true God made him prosper.—2 Chron. 26:5.*

As a youth, King Uzziah was humble. He learned "to fear the true God." And Jehovah blessed him for most of his 68 years. (2 Chron. 26:1-4) Uzziah defeated many of the nation's enemies and strengthened Jerusalem's defenses. (2 Chron. 26:6-15) Uzziah was surely happy with all that God had helped him to do. (Eccl. 3:12, 13) King Uzziah was accustomed to having others follow his instructions. Did that make him think he could do anything he wanted? Well, one day Uzziah decided to enter Jehovah's temple and presumptuously tried to burn incense on the altar, which kings were not allowed to do. (2 Chron. 26:16-18) High Priest Azariah tried to correct him, but Uzziah got very angry. Sadly, Uzziah ruined his record of faithful service and was punished with leprosy. (2 Chron. 26:19-21) How different his life would have turned out had he remained humble! *w23.09* 10 ¶9-10

**Friday, August 15**

*He . . . separated himself, fearing those of the circumcised class. —Gal. 2:12.*

Even after he became an anointed Christian, the apostle Peter had to deal with his weaknesses. In 36 C.E., Peter was present when the uncircumcised Gentile Cornelius was anointed with holy spirit, which was clear evidence that "God is not partial" and that Gentiles could be part of the Christian congregation. (Acts 10:34, 44, 45) Peter thereafter felt free to share meals with Gentiles, something he would never have done earlier. However, some Jewish Christians felt that Jews and Gentiles should not eat together. When some who had that viewpoint came to Antioch, Peter stopped eating with his Gentile brothers, likely out of fear of offending Jewish Christians. The apostle Paul saw this hypocrisy and rebuked Peter publicly. (Gal. 2:13, 14) Despite this setback, Peter persevered. *w23.09* 22 ¶8

**Saturday, August 16**

*He will firmly ground you. —1 Pet. 5:10.*

An honest self-examination may reveal that you have certain weaknesses, but do not be discouraged. "The Lord is kind," and he will help you to improve. (1 Pet. 2:3) The apostle Peter assures us: "God . . . will himself finish your training. He will make you firm." Peter once felt unworthy to be in the presence of God's Son. (Luke 5:8) But with the loving support of Jehovah and of Jesus, Peter persevered as a follower of Christ. Peter thus was approved to gain "entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:11) What a reward! If you persevere as Peter did and allow yourself to be trained by Jehovah, you too will receive the reward of everlasting life. You will "attain the goal of your faith, your salvation."—1 Pet. 1:9. *w23.09* 31 ¶16-17

**Sunday, August 17**

*Worship the One who made the heaven and the earth.—Rev. 14:7.*

The ancient tabernacle had one courtyard—a fenced, open area where the priests performed their duties. The large copper altar of burnt offering was located in the courtyard, along with a copper basin of water that the priests used to cleanse themselves before performing their sacred service. (Ex. 30:17-20; 40:6-8) Today, the remnant of Christ's anointed brothers faithfully serve in the earthly inner courtyard of the spiritual temple. The presence of the large basin of water is an important reminder for them, as it is for all Christians, to remain morally and spiritually clean. Where, then, do the "great crowd" offer their worship? The apostle John saw them "standing before the throne," in what corresponds on earth to the outer courtyard, where "they are rendering [God] sacred service day and night in his temple." (Rev. 7:9, 13-15) How we cherish having a place in Jehovah's arrangement for pure worship! *w23.10* 28 ¶15-16

**Monday, August 18**

*Because of the promise of God, . . . he became powerful by his faith. —Rom. 4:20.*

One way that Jehovah supplies power to us is through the elders. (Isa. 32: 1, 2) So when you feel anxious, share your concerns with the elders. When they offer you help, accept it gratefully. By means of them, Jehovah can make you strong. Our Bible-based hope of everlasting life —either in an earthly Paradise or in the heavenly Kingdom—can also fill us with power. (Rom. 4:3, 18, 19) Our hope strengthens us to endure trials, preach the good news, and carry out various assignments in the congregation. (1 Thess. 1:3) That same hope strengthened the apostle Paul. He was "hard-pressed," "perplexed," "persecuted," and "knocked down." His life was even in danger. (2 Cor. 4:8-10) Paul gained the strength to endure by focusing on his hope. (2 Cor. 4:16-18) Paul focused on his future hope of eternal life in heaven. Paul meditated on that hope, and as a result, he felt "renewed from day to day." *w23.10* 15-16 ¶14-17

**Tuesday, August 19**

*Jehovah will give strength to his people. Jehovah will bless his people with peace.—Ps. 29:11.*

When praying, consider if it is Jehovah's time to grant your request. We may feel that we need an immediate answer to our prayers. Really, though, Jehovah knows the best time to help. (Heb. 4:16) When we do not receive what we ask for right away, we may think that Jehovah's answer is 'No.' But his answer could in effect be 'Not yet.' For example, a young brother prayed to be cured of his illness. But his health did not improve. If Jehovah had miraculously cured him, Satan could have argued that the brother continued serving Jehovah only because he had been healed. (Job 1:9-11; 2:4) Additionally, Jehovah has already set the time to cure all sicknesses. (Isa. 33:24; Rev. 21:3, 4) And until then, we cannot expect miraculous cures. So the brother could ask Jehovah to give him the strength and the peace of mind to endure his illness and to continue serving God faithfully. *w23.11* 24 ¶13

**Wednesday, August 20**

*He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor has he repaid us what our errors deserve.—Ps. 103:10.*

Samson had made a serious mistake, but he did not give up. He looked for an opportunity to fulfill his God-given assignment against the Philistines. (Judg. 16:28-30) Samson begged Jehovah: "Let me take revenge on the Philistines." The true God answered Samson's plea and restored his miraculous strength. As a result, Samson was more successful against the Philistines on this occasion than ever before. Although Samson experienced the painful consequences of his mistake, he did not stop trying to do Jehovah's will. Even if we make a mistake and need reproof or lose a privilege, we must not give up. Remember, Jehovah does not give up on us. (Ps. 103:8, 9) Despite our mistakes, we can still be useful to Jehovah, just as Samson was. *w23.09* 6 ¶15-16

**Thursday, August 21**

*Endurance* [*produces*] *an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope.—Rom. 5:4.*

Your endurance brings Jehovah's approval. This does not mean that Jehovah is pleased that you are experiencing trials or problems. What God approves of is you. Your endurance results in an approved condition. What an amazing blessing! (Ps. 5:12) Recall that Abraham endured tests and enjoyed divine approval. Jehovah viewed him as His friend and counted him as righteous. (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:13, 22) The same can be true of us. God does not base his approval on the amount of work we do in his service or on the privileges we enjoy. He grants his approval because of our faithful endurance. And no matter what our age, circumstance, or ability is, all of us can endure. Are you faithfully enduring a trial right now? If so, take comfort in knowing that you have God's approval. Realizing that we have God's approval can have a powerful effect on us. It can strengthen our hope. *w23.12* 11 ¶13-14

**Friday, August 22**

*Prove yourself a man.—1 Ki. 2:2.*

A Christian man must learn to communicate well. A man who is a good communicator listens to and acknowledges the thoughts and feelings of others. (Prov. 20:5) He can learn to read another person's tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language. You cannot learn to do this without spending time with people. If you constantly use electronic tools to communicate, such as email and texting, your ability to communicate with people in person could weaken. Therefore, create opportunities to talk with others in person. (2 John 12) A mature Christian man must also be able to support himself and his household. (1 Tim. 5:8) It is good to learn a skill that will help you to find employment. (Acts 18:2, 3; 20:34; Eph. 4:28) Gain the reputation of being someone who works hard and who sticks to a task until it is completed. If you do, you will be more likely to get a job and keep it. *w23.12* 27 ¶12-13

**Saturday, August 23**

*Jehovah's day is coming exactly as a thief in the night.—1 Thess. 5:2.*

When the Bible speaks of "Jehovah's day," it refers to the time when Jehovah judges his enemies and brings salvation to his people. In the past, Jehovah at times carried out judgments. (Isa. 13:1, 6; Ezek. 13:5; Zeph. 1:8) In our time, "Jehovah's day" begins with the attack on Babylon the Great and culminates in the battle of Armageddon. To survive that "day," we need to prepare now. Jesus taught that we must not only get ready for the "great tribulation" but also "keep ready" for it. (Matt. 24:21; Luke 12:40) In his first inspired letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul used a number of illustrations to help Christians keep ready for Jehovah's great day of judgment. Paul knew that Jehovah's day would not come right then. (2 Thess. 2:1-3) Still, he urged his brothers to prepare for that day as if it were coming tomorrow, and we too can apply his counsel. *w23.06* 8 ¶1-2

**Sunday, August 24**

*My beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable.—1 Cor. 15:58.*

In the late 1970's, a 60-story skyscraper gradually rose above the skyline of Tokyo, Japan. Observers wondered how it would be able to withstand the frequent earthquakes in that city. The secret? Engineers designed the building to be rigid yet flexible enough to absorb seismic shocks. Christians are like that skyscraper. In what way? A Christian must maintain a balance between steadfastness and flexibility. He needs to be strong and immovable when it comes to upholding Jehovah's laws and standards. He is "ready to obey" and does not compromise. On the other hand, he needs to be "reasonable," or flexible, when the situation allows for it or even requires it. (Jas. 3:17) A Christian who has learned to have this balanced view will avoid the extremes of being either excessively rigid or overly permissive. *w23.07* 14 ¶1-2

**Monday, August 25**

*Though you never saw him, you love him.—1 Pet. 1:8.*

Jesus had to stand up to temptations from Satan the Devil, including direct attacks on his loyalty to God. (Matt. 4:1-11) Satan was determined to make Jesus sin so that he would not be able to pay the ransom. During his earthly ministry, Jesus endured further tests. He faced persecution and threats to his life. (Luke 4:28, 29; 13:31) He had to deal with the imperfections of his followers. (Mark 9:33, 34) When he was on trial for his life, he was tortured and ridiculed. Then he was executed in an extremely painful and humiliating way. (Heb. 12:1-3) He had to endure the final part of his trial on his own, without Jehovah's protection. (Matt. 27:46) Clearly, the ransom cost Jesus a great deal. Do we not feel deep love for Jesus when we reflect on how he willingly sacrificed so much in our behalf? *w24.01* 10-11 ¶7-9

**Tuesday, August 26**

*All who are hasty surely head for poverty.—Prov. 21:5.*

Patience helps us in our dealings with others. It helps us to listen attentively when others speak. (Jas. 1:19) Patience also promotes peace. It protects us from reacting too quickly and saying something unkind when we are under stress. And if we are patient, we will be slow to anger when someone hurts our feelings. Instead of retaliating, we will "continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely." (Col. 3:12, 13) Patience can also help us to make better decisions. Instead of being hasty or impulsive, we will take the time to research and evaluate the options that we have. For example, if we are looking for work, we might be inclined to accept the first offer we receive. However, if we are patient, we will take the time to consider the impact the job could have on our family and spiritual life. By being patient, we may avoid making a bad decision. *w23.08* 22 ¶8-9

**Wednesday, August 27**

*I see in my body another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my body.—Rom. 7:23.*

If you feel discouraged by your sinful tendencies, thinking about the promise you made to Jehovah when you dedicated yourself to him will strengthen your resolve to fight against temptation. How? When you make a dedication to Jehovah, you disown yourself. This means that you say no to personal desires and ambitions that would displease Jehovah. (Matt. 16:24) So when you face a test, you will not need to spend time debating what to do. You will have already shut the door on all options except one—faithfulness to Jehovah. You will remain firmly resolved to please Jehovah. You will in that sense be like Job. Even though he faced extremely difficult trials, he resolutely stated: "I will not renounce my integrity!"—Job 27:5. *w24.03* 9 ¶6-7

**Thursday, August 28**

*Jehovah is near to all those calling on him, to all who call on him in truth. —Ps. 145:18.*

Jehovah, "the God of love," is with us! (2 Cor. 13:11) He is interested in us personally. We are convinced that we are "surrounded by His loyal love." (Ps. 32:10) The more we meditate on how he has shown us his love, the more real he becomes and the closer we feel to him. We can approach him freely and tell him how much we need his love. We can share all our worries with him, confident that he understands and that he is eager to help us. (Ps. 145:19) Just as we are drawn to a warm fire on a cold day, we are drawn to Jehovah's warm love. Although Jehovah's love is powerful, it is also tender. So welcome Jehovah's warm love in your life. And may we all respond to his love by exclaiming: "I love Jehovah"!—Ps. 116:1. *w24.01* 31 ¶19-20

**Friday, August 29**

*I have made your name known.*
*—John 17:26.*

Jesus did more than just inform people that God's name is Jehovah. The Jews whom Jesus taught already knew God's name. But Jesus took the lead in being "the one who . . . explained Him." (John 1:17, 18) For example, the Hebrew Scriptures reveal that Jehovah is merciful and compassionate. (Ex. 34:5-7) Jesus made that truth clearer than ever when he related the parable of the wayward son and his father. When we read about that father catching sight of his repentant son "while he was still a long way off," running to meet him, embracing him, and forgiving him wholeheartedly, we see a most vivid picture of Jehovah's mercy and compassion. (Luke 15:11-32) Jesus revealed his Father as He truly is. *w24.02* 10 ¶8-9

**Saturday, August 30**

*Comfort others . . . with the comfort that we receive from God.—2 Cor. 1:4.*

Jehovah brings refreshment and comfort to those who are distressed. How can we imitate Jehovah in feeling compassion and in providing comfort to others? One way we can do so is by cultivating qualities in our heart that are related to giving comfort. What are some of these qualities? What will help us to maintain the love that we need in order to "keep comforting one another" from day to day? (1 Thess. 4:18) We need to cultivate such tender qualities as fellow feeling, brotherly affection, and kindness. (Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8) How will these qualities help us? When feelings of compassion and related qualities become part of our personality, we cannot help but give comfort to those in distress. As Jesus stated, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of his good treasure sends out good things." (Matt. 12:34, 35) Giving comfort to our brothers and sisters in need is truly an important way in which we express our love to them. *w23.11* 10 ¶10-11

**Sunday, August 31**

*Those having insight will understand.*
*—Dan. 12:10.*

We need to ask for help if we are to understand Bible prophecy. Consider this illustration. Imagine that you are visiting an unfamiliar place but a friend who is traveling with you is well-acquainted with the area. He knows exactly where you are and where each road leads. No doubt you would be glad that your friend agreed to come with you! In a similar way, Jehovah knows where we are in the stream of time and what is on the road ahead of us. So to understand Bible prophecy, we must humbly ask for Jehovah's help. (Dan. 2:28; 2 Pet. 1: 19, 20) Like any good parent, Jehovah wants his children to have a happy future. (Jer. 29:11) But unlike any human parent, Jehovah can foretell the future with complete accuracy. He had prophecies recorded in his Word so that we can know about important events before they happen.—Isa. 46: 10. *w23.08* 8 ¶3-4

**Monday, September 1**

*A daybreak will visit us from on high. —Luke 1:78.*

God has given Jesus the power to solve all mankind's problems. By means of his miracles, Jesus demonstrated his power to conquer obstacles that we could never overcome on our own. For example, he has the power to free us from the root cause of mankind's problems—inherited sin and its effects, sickness and death. (Matt. 9:1-6; Rom. 5:12, 18, 19) His miraculous works proved that he can cure "every sort of" sickness and even resurrect the dead. (Matt. 4:23; John 11:43, 44) Also, he has the power to control violent windstorms and defeat wicked spirits. (Mark 4:37-39; Luke 8:2) How reassuring it is to know that Jehovah has placed such power in the hands of his Son! We can be fully confident that the future blessings under God's Kingdom will come true. The miracles Jesus performed as a man on earth teach us what he will do on a much greater scale as the heavenly King of God's Kingdom. *w23.04* 3 ¶5-7

**Tuesday, September 2**

*The spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God. —1 Cor. 2:10.*

If you are in a large congregation and feel that your hand is frequently overlooked, you might be tempted to give up. But do not stop trying to comment. Prepare several comments for each meeting. Then if you are not chosen to comment early in the study, you will still have opportunities to comment as the meeting progresses. When preparing for the *Watchtower* Study, think about how each paragraph ties in to the theme of the article. If you do, you will likely have something to offer throughout the lesson. Additionally, you might prepare to comment on paragraphs that discuss deeper truths that are more difficult to explain. Why? Because there may be fewer volunteers during that part of the lesson. What if you find that after several meetings you still have not had an opportunity to comment? Tell the conductor before the meeting which question you would like to answer. *w23.04* 21-22 ¶9-10

**Wednesday, September 3**

*Joseph . . . did as the angel of Jehovah had directed him, and he took his wife home. —Matt. 1:24.*

Joseph readily applied Jehovah's direction, and that made him a better husband. On at least three occasions, he received instructions from God regarding his family. Each time, he obeyed promptly, even when it meant making big changes. (Matt. 1: 20; 2:13-15, 19-21) By following God's direction, Joseph protected Mary, supported her, and provided for her. Imagine how Joseph's actions must have deepened Mary's love and respect for him! Husbands, you can imitate Joseph by seeking Bible-based advice on caring for your family. When you apply this advice, even if it means making changes, you show love for your wife and you strengthen your marriage. A sister in Vanuatu who has been married for over 20 years says: "When my husband seeks and applies Jehovah's direction, I respect him more. I feel secure, and I have confidence in his decisions." *w23.05* 21 ¶5

**Thursday, September 4**

*A highway will be there, yes, a way called the Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35:8.*

The Jews returning from Babylon were to become "a holy people" to their God. (Deut. 7:6) That did not mean, though, that they did not need to make changes in order to please Jehovah. Most of the Jews born in Babylon had apparently become accustomed to some of the thinking and standards of the Babylonians. Decades after the first Jews returned to Israel, Governor Nehemiah was astonished to find out that children born in Israel had not even learned the language of the Jews. (Deut. 6:6, 7; Neh. 13:23, 24) How could those young ones learn to love and worship Jehovah if they could not understand Hebrew—the main language in which God's Word was written? (Ezra 10:3, 44) So those Jews had significant changes to make, but it would be much easier for them to make those changes in Israel, where pure worship was gradually being restored.—Neh. 8:8, 9. *w23.05* 15 ¶6-7

**Friday, September 5**

*Jehovah supports all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. —Ps. 145:14.*

Unfortunately, no matter how motivated or disciplined we are, we may still have setbacks. For example, "unexpected events" may rob us of the time we need to work on our goal. (Eccl. 9:11) We may face a difficulty that leaves us feeling discouraged and with little strength. (Prov. 24:10) Our imperfect flesh may cause us to act in a way that does not help us with our goal. (Rom. 7:23) Or we may just feel tired. (Matt. 26:43) What can help us to overcome a setback or a bad day? Remember that a setback does not mean you have failed. The Bible says that we may repeatedly experience problems or difficulties. However, it also makes clear that we can get up again. Yes, by moving forward despite a setback, you prove to Jehovah that you want to please him. How happy Jehovah must be when he sees you continuing to strive for your goal! *w23.05* 30 ¶14-15

**Saturday, September 6**

[*Become*] *examples to the flock. —1 Pet. 5:3.*

Pioneering helps a young man to learn how to work effectively with a variety of people. It also helps him to make a reasonable budget and live by it. (Phil. 4:11-13) A good stepping stone to full-time service is auxiliary pioneering, which helps one be ready to take up regular pioneering. Pioneering may open the door to other forms of full-time service, including serving as a construction servant or a Bethelite. Christian men should have the goal of qualifying to serve their brothers and sisters as congregation elders. The Bible says that men who are reaching out for this role are "desirous of a fine work." (1 Tim. 3:1) First, a brother must qualify to serve as a ministerial servant. Ministerial servants assist the elders in many practical ways. Both elders and ministerial servants humbly serve their brothers and sisters and share zealously in the ministry. *w23.12* 28 ¶14-16

**Sunday, September 7**

*While he was still a boy, he started to search for the God of David his forefather.—2 Chron. 34:3.*

King Josiah was a teenager when he started to search for Jehovah. He wanted to learn about Jehovah and do His will. However, life was not easy for this young king. He had to take a stand for pure worship when false worship was prevalent. And indeed he did! Before Josiah was 20 years old, he began to remove false worship from the nation. (2 Chron. 34:1, 2) Even if you are very young, you can decide to imitate Josiah by searching for Jehovah and learning to appreciate His qualities. That fine course will move you to dedicate yourself to him. What will that dedication mean in your daily life? Luke, who got baptized at age 14, says, "From now on, I will put serving Jehovah first in my life and will try to make him happy." (Mark 12:30) What a blessing it will be for you if you desire to do the same! *w23.09* 11 ¶12-13

**Monday, September 8**

*Show respect for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord. —1 Thess. 5:12.*

When the apostle Paul wrote this letter, the Thessalonian congregation was less than a year old. Its appointed men were likely inexperienced and may have made mistakes. Still, they deserved respect. As the great tribulation approaches, we may need to depend on local elders for direction even more than we do now. We may lose contact with world headquarters and the branch office; hence, it is important to learn to love and respect our elders now. No matter what happens, let us keep our senses, not focusing on their imperfections, but focusing on the fact that Jehovah through Christ is guiding these faithful men. Just as a helmet protected a soldier's head, our hope of salvation protects our thinking. We recognize that what this world offers is worthless. (Phil. 3:8) Our hope helps us to remain calm and steady. *w23.06* 11-12 ¶11-12

**Tuesday, September 9**

*A stupid woman is loud. She is ignorant.—Prov. 9:13.*

Those hearing the "stupid woman" face a choice: Will they accept her invitation or reject it? There are valid reasons why we should avoid sexually immoral conduct. The "stupid woman" is described as saying: "Stolen waters are sweet." (Prov. 9:17) What are "stolen waters"? The Bible likens sexual intimacies that a married couple may enjoy to refreshing water. (Prov. 5:15-18) Husband and wife can find pleasure in appropriate sexual acts within their legal marriage. How different, though, with "stolen waters." That may refer to illicit, immoral sex. Such often occurs in secret, just as a thief often steals in secret. The "stolen waters" may seem particularly sweet if those involved feel that they are getting away with their sinful course. What a sad deception! Jehovah sees all. Nothing could be more bitter than losing his favor, so there is nothing "sweet" about that tragic loss. —1 Cor. 6:9, 10. *w23.06* 22 ¶7-9

**Wednesday, September 10**

*Even if I do it against my will, I still have a stewardship entrusted to me. —1 Cor. 9:17.*

What if, for a time, you feel that your prayers have become mechanical or that your ministry is in a rut? Do not conclude that you have lost Jehovah's spirit. You are an imperfect human, and your feelings can fluctuate. If your zeal starts to diminish, reflect on the example of the apostle Paul. Although he tried to imitate Jesus, he knew that at times he might not feel as motivated as at other times. Paul was determined to accomplish his ministry despite how he might feel at the moment. Similarly, do not let your imperfect feelings make your decisions for you. Resolve that you will do the right thing despite how you feel. Your actions should in time affect your feelings for the better.—1 Cor. 9:16. *w24.03* 11-12 ¶12-13

**Thursday, September 11**

*Demonstrate the proof of your love to them.—2 Cor. 8:24.*

We can show love to our brothers and sisters by welcoming them into our circle of friends. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) Many of us belong to congregations made up of brothers and sisters who are from different backgrounds and who have a variety of personalities. We can strengthen our love for all of them by focusing on their good qualities. When we learn to see others as Jehovah sees them, we prove that we love them. Love will be vital during the great tribulation. When that tribulation begins, where will we find protection? Consider what Jehovah instructed his people to do when ancient Babylon was attacked: "Go, my people, enter your inner rooms, and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourself for a brief moment until the wrath has passed by." (Isa. 26:20) It seems that those words also apply to us who will face the great tribulation. *w23.07* 6-7 ¶14-16

**Friday, September 12**

*The scene of this world is changing. —1 Cor. 7:31.*

Have a reputation for being reasonable. Ask yourself: 'Do people perceive me as being reasonable, yielding, and tolerant? Or do they view me as a rigid, harsh, or headstrong person? Do I listen to others and yield to their wishes when appropriate?' The degree to which we are reasonable reflects the extent to which we are imitating Jehovah and Jesus. Reasonableness involves being flexible when our circumstances change. Such changes can create unexpected hardships for us. We may face a health emergency. Or sudden changes in the economy or in the political climate where we live may completely disrupt our life. (Eccl. 9:11) Even a change in a theocratic assignment can test us. We can successfully adapt to new circumstances if we take the following four steps: (1) accept reality, (2) look to the future, (3) focus on the positive, and (4) do things for others. *w23.07* 21-22 ¶7-8

**Saturday, September 13**

*You are someone very precious.*
*—Dan. 9:23.*

The prophet Daniel was a young man when the Babylonians made him a prisoner of war and dragged him far away from his homeland. But Daniel obviously impressed his captors. They saw "what appear[ed] to the eyes" —that Daniel was "without any defect, of good appearance" and that he came from an influential family. (1 Sam. 16:7) For those reasons, the Babylonians trained him to become an elite member of their society. (Dan. 1: 3, 4, 6) Jehovah loved Daniel because of the type of person that this young man chose to be. In fact, Daniel may have been only in his late teens or early 20's when Jehovah mentioned him favorably together with Noah and Job, men who had spent many decades building a good reputation with God. (Gen. 5:32; 6:9, 10; Job 42:16, 17; Ezek. 14:14) And Jehovah continued to love Daniel throughout his long and remarkable life.—Dan. 10:11, 19. *w23.08* 2 ¶1-2

**Sunday, September 14**

*Comprehend fully what is the breadth and length and height and depth.*
*—Eph. 3:18.*

When deciding whether to buy a house, you would want to examine all the aspects of your future home in person. We can do something similar when we read and study the Bible. If you just read it quickly, you may learn only basic facts—"the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God." (Heb. 5:12) Instead, as with the house, go "inside" to examine the rich details. An excellent way to study the Bible is to see how the various parts of its message connect together. Endeavor to understand not only what truths you believe but also why you believe them. To understand God's Word fully, we must learn deep Bible truths. The apostle Paul urged his Christian brothers and sisters to study God's Word diligently so that they could "comprehend fully what is the breadth and length and height and depth" of the truth. Then they would become further "rooted and established" in their faith. (Eph. 3:14-19) We need to do the same. *w23.10* 18 ¶1-3

**Monday, September 15**

*Brothers, take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets who spoke in the name of Jehovah.—Jas. 5:10.*

The Bible contains many examples of people who were patient. Why not make it a study project to examine such examples? For instance, although David was anointed at an early age to be the future king of Israel, he had to wait many years before he received the kingship. Simeon and Anna worshipped Jehovah faithfully while they waited for the promised Messiah. (Luke 2:25, 36-38) As you study such accounts, look for the answers to the following questions: What may have helped this person to show patience? How did he benefit by being patient? How can I imitate him? You might also benefit by learning about those who did not show patience. (1 Sam. 13:8-14) You might ask: 'What may have contributed to their lack of patience? What consequences did they face?' *w23.08* 25 ¶15

**Tuesday, September 16**

*We have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.—John 6:69.*

The apostle Peter was loyal; he did not let anything cause him to give up permanently. He demonstrated his loyalty on one occasion when Jesus said something that his disciples did not understand. (John 6:68) Without waiting for an explanation, many stopped following Jesus. But not Peter. He recognized that only Jesus had "sayings of everlasting life." Jesus knew that Peter and the other apostles would abandon him. Nevertheless, Jesus expressed confidence that Peter would recover and remain faithful. (Luke 22:31, 32) Jesus understood that "the spirit . . . is eager, but the flesh is weak." (Mark 14:38) Accordingly, even after Peter denied knowing him, Jesus did not give up on his apostle. The resurrected Jesus appeared to Peter—evidently when Peter was alone. (Mark 16:7; Luke 24: 34; 1 Cor. 15:5) How that must have encouraged the downcast apostle! *w23.09* 22 ¶9-10

**Wednesday, September 17**

*Happy are those whose lawless deeds have been pardoned and whose sins have been covered.—Rom. 4:7.*

God pardons or covers over the sins of those who put faith in him. He forgives them completely and no longer takes their sins into account. (Ps. 32:1, 2) He views such individuals as guiltless and righteous on the basis of their faith. Although they were declared righteous, Abraham, David, and other faithful worshippers of God were still imperfect sinners. But because of their faith, God viewed them as blameless, especially when compared with those who had no standing with him. (Eph. 2:12) As the apostle Paul makes clear in his letter, faith is central to having a personal relationship with God. That was true in the case of both Abraham and David, and it is true of us as well. *w23.12* 3 ¶6-7

**Thursday, September 18**

*Always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips that make public declaration to his name.—Heb. 13:15.*

Today all Christians have the privilege of offering sacrifices to Jehovah by using their time, energy, and resources to further the interests of God's Kingdom. We can show that we cherish our privilege to worship Jehovah by offering him our very best sacrifices. The apostle Paul outlines various aspects of our worship that we should never neglect. (Heb. 10:22-25) These include approaching Jehovah in prayer, making public declaration of our hope, meeting together as a congregation, and encouraging one another "all the more so as [we] see [Jehovah's] day drawing near." Toward the end of the Revelation account, Jehovah's angel states the following twice for emphasis: "Worship God!" (Rev. 19:10; 22:9) May we never forget this deep spiritual truth regarding Jehovah's great spiritual temple and the cherished privilege we have to worship our great God! *w23.10* 29 ¶17-18

**Friday, September 19**

*Continue loving one another.*
*—1 John 4:7.*

We all want to "continue loving one another." However, it is important for us to remember that Jesus warned that "the love of the greater number [would] grow cold." (Matt. 24:12) Jesus was not saying that this would occur on a large scale among his disciples. Nonetheless, we should remain alert so that we are not influenced by the lack of love in the world around us. With that thought in mind, let us consider this important question: Is there a way to test whether our love for our brothers is strong? One way to determine the strength of our love is to examine how we handle certain situations in life. (2 Cor. 8:8) One such situation is mentioned by the apostle Peter: "Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8) So the weaknesses and imperfections of others can put our love to the test. *w23.11* 10-11 ¶12-13

**Saturday, September 20**

*Love one another.—John 13:34.*

We cannot obey Jesus' command about love if we show love to some in the congregation but not to others. Granted, we may feel closer to some than to others, as did Jesus. (John 13:23; 20:2) But the apostle Peter reminds us that we should strive to have "brotherly affection"—a warm family-like attachment—for all our brothers and sisters. (1 Pet. 2:17) Peter urged us to "love one another intensely from the heart." (1 Pet. 1:22) In this context, to love "intensely" involves stretching the limits of our natural inclination to love. For example, what if a brother offends or hurts us in some way? Our instinct may be to retaliate rather than to show love. Yet, Peter learned from Jesus that retaliation does not please God. (John 18:10, 11) Peter wrote: "Do not pay back injury for injury or insult for insult. Instead, repay with a blessing." (1 Pet. 3:9) Allow intense love to move you to be kind and considerate. *w23.09* 28-29 ¶9-11

**Sunday, September 21**

*Women should likewise be . . . moderate in habits, faithful in all things.—1 Tim. 3:11.*

We are amazed at how quickly a child grows into an adult. This growth seems to take place automatically. However, growing to Christian maturity is by no means automatic. (1 Cor. 13:11; Heb. 6:1) To reach that goal, we need a deep personal relationship with Jehovah. We also need his holy spirit as we cultivate godly qualities, develop practical skills, and prepare for future responsibilities. (Prov. 1:5) Jehovah made humans to be male or female. (Gen. 1:27) Obviously, men and women are physically different, but they are different in other ways as well. For example, Jehovah made men and women to fulfill specific roles, so they need qualities and skills that will help them to carry out their respective assignments.—Gen. 2:18. *w23.12* 18 ¶1-2

**Monday, September 22**

*Make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son. —Matt. 28:19.*

Did Jesus want others to use his Father's personal name? Certainly. Some pious religious leaders of the day may have held that God's name was too sacred to pronounce, but Jesus never allowed such unscriptural traditions to prevent him from honoring his Father's name. Consider the time when he cured a demonized man in the region of the Gerasenes. The people became fearful and begged Jesus to leave, so he did not stay in that region. (Mark 5:16, 17) Still, Jesus wanted Jehovah's name to be known there. So he commissioned the man he had cured to tell people, not what Jesus had done, but what Jehovah had done. (Mark 5:19) He wants the same today—that we make his Father's name known throughout the whole world! (Matt. 24:14; 28:20) When we do our part, we please our King, Jesus. *w24.02* 10 ¶10

**Tuesday, September 23**

*You have persevered for the sake of my name.—Rev. 2:3.*

We are truly blessed to be part of Jehovah's organization during these turbulent last days. As world conditions deteriorate, Jehovah provides us with a united, spiritual family of brothers and sisters. (Ps. 133:1) He helps us to have strong family bonds. (Eph. 5:33–6:1) And he gives us the insight and wisdom we need to have true inner peace. We must, however, work hard to keep serving Jehovah faithfully. Why? Because we may at times be offended by the imperfections of others. We may also find it difficult to put up with our own shortcomings, especially if we make the same mistakes time and again. We need to persevere in Jehovah's service (1) when a fellow believer offends us, (2) when our spouse disappoints us, and (3) when we are disappointed with ourselves. *w24.03* 14 ¶1-2

**Wednesday, September 24**

*To the extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.—Phil. 3:16.*

From time to time, you will hear the experiences of brothers and sisters who have reached out to expand their sacred service. Perhaps they attended the School for Kingdom Evangelizers or moved to where there is a greater need. If you can set such a goal, by all means do so. Jehovah's people are eager to expand their ministry. (Acts 16:9) What, though, if right now you are unable to do that? Do not think that you are inferior to those who can. The Christian race is one of endurance. (Matt. 10:22) Do not underestimate the value of serving Jehovah according to your abilities and circumstances. That is an important way that you can keep following Jesus after baptism.—Ps. 26:1. *w24.03* 10 ¶11

**Thursday, September 25**

*He kindly forgave us all our trespasses.—Col. 2:13.*

Our heavenly Father promises to forgive us if we are repentant. (Ps. 86:5) So if we are truly sorry for the sins we have committed, we can take Jehovah at his word—he has forgiven us. Remember that Jehovah is not rigid, or inflexible. He never demands more of us than we can reasonably do. He appreciates whatever we do for him as long as we are doing our best. Also, reflect on Bible examples of those who served Jehovah whole-souled. Think of the apostle Paul. He exerted himself zealously for years, traveling thousands of miles and establishing many congregations. Yet, when circumstances limited his share in the preaching work, did he lose God's approval? No. He continued to do what he could, and Jehovah blessed him. (Acts 28:30, 31) Similarly, what we can give to Jehovah may vary at times. But what matters to him is why we do it. *w24.03* 27 ¶7, 9

**Friday, September 26**

*Early in the morning,* [*Jesus*] *left for an isolated place, and there he began praying.—Mark 1:35.*

By means of his own prayers to Jehovah, Jesus set an example for his disciples to follow. Throughout his ministry, Jesus prayed frequently. He had to set aside time to pray because he was often busy and surrounded by many people. (Mark 6:31, 45, 46) He got up early in the morning so that he could have time alone to pray. On at least one occasion, he prayed all night before making an important decision. (Luke 6:12, 13) And Jesus prayed repeatedly on the night before he died as he focused on completing the most challenging aspect of his earthly assignment. (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44) Jesus' example teaches us that no matter how busy we are, we need to set aside time to pray. Like Jesus, we may need to reserve time for prayer—getting up early in the morning or staying up a little later in the evening. When we do, we show Jehovah that we appreciate this special gift. *w23.05* 3 ¶4-5

**Saturday, September 27**

*The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy spirit, which was given to us.—Rom. 5:5.*

Notice the expression "poured out" in the text above. One reference work describes it as "come upon us like a stream." What a powerful image to highlight the abundance of Jehovah's love for the anointed! The anointed know that they are "loved by God." (Jude 1) The apostle John expressed their feelings when he wrote: "See what sort of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1) Is Jehovah's love limited to the anointed? No, Jehovah has proved his love for all of us. What is the greatest confirmation of Jehovah's love? The ransom—the most extraordinary act of love in the universe!—John 3:16; Rom. 5:8. *w24.01* 28 ¶9-10

**Sunday, September 28**

*My enemies will retreat on the day that I call for help. Of this I am confident: God is on my side. —Ps. 56:9.*

The verse above reveals a way that David conquered his fears. Even though his life was in jeopardy, he meditated on what Jehovah would yet do for him. David knew that Jehovah would rescue him at the right time. After all, Jehovah had declared that David would be the next king of Israel. (1 Sam. 16:1, 13) To David, whatever Jehovah promised was as good as fulfilled. What has Jehovah promised to do for you? We do not expect him to shield us from all problems. Still, whatever trials you may face in this system of things, Jehovah will do away with them in the coming new world. (Isa. 25:7-9) Our Creator is surely strong enough to raise the dead, to heal us, and to remove all opposers.—1 John 4:4. *w24.01* 6 ¶12-13

**Monday, September 29**

*Happy is the one whose transgression is pardoned, whose sin is covered. —Ps. 32:1.*

Reflect on your dedication and baptism. You took those steps because you wanted to stand on Jehovah's side. Think back to what helped you to become convinced that you had found the truth. You took in accurate knowledge of Jehovah and grew to respect and love him as your heavenly Father. You developed faith and were motivated to repent. Your heart moved you to abandon wrong practices and to live in harmony with God's will. You felt relief when you sensed God's forgiveness. (Ps. 32:2) You attended Christian meetings and began to share with others the wonderful things you had learned. As a dedicated and baptized Christian, you are now walking on the road to life, determined not to lose your way. (Matt. 7:13, 14) May you stand firm, steadfast in your devotion to Jehovah and immovable in your obedience to his commands. *w23.07* 17 ¶14; 19 ¶19

**Tuesday, September 30**

*God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out so that you may be able to endure it. —1 Cor. 10:13.*

By reflecting on your prayer of dedication to Jehovah, you will find the strength to resist any temptation. For example, would you start flirting with another person's mate? Certainly not! You will have already said no to that. You will thus spare yourself the anguish of having to deal with improper feelings after they have taken root. You will "turn away" from "the path of the wicked." (Prov. 4:14, 15) Recalling Jesus' determination to please his Father, you will quickly and firmly reject anything that you know would displease the God to whom you are dedicated. (Matt. 4:10; John 8:29) The fact is that trials and temptations give you an opportunity to show that you are determined to keep following Jesus. As you do, you can be assured that Jehovah will help you. *w24.03* 9-10 ¶8-10

**Wednesday, October 1**

*The wisdom from above is . . . ready to obey.—Jas. 3:17.*

Do you ever struggle to be obedient? King David did, so he prayed to God: "Stir within me a willingness to obey you." (Ps. 51:12) David loved Jehovah. Still, David at times struggled to be obedient, and so do we. Why? First, we have inherited a tendency to be disobedient. Second, Satan constantly tries to incite us to rebel, as he did. (2 Cor. 11:3) Third, we are surrounded by this world's rebellious attitude, "the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2) We must work hard not only to fight our tendency to sin but also to resist the pressure that the Devil and this world put on us to disobey. We must put forth effort to obey Jehovah and those whom he has appointed to a position of authority. *w23.10* 6 ¶1

**Thursday, October 2**

*You have saved the fine wine until now.—John 2:10.*

What can we learn from Jesus' miracle of turning water into wine? We learn a lesson in humility. Jesus did not boast about the miracle; in fact, he never boasted about his accomplishments. On the contrary, he humbly and repeatedly gave all glory and credit to his Father. (John 5:19, 30; 8:28) If we imitate Jesus by keeping a humble view of ourselves, we will not boast about our achievements. Let us boast, not about ourselves, but about the wonderful God we are privileged to serve. (Jer. 9:23, 24) Let us give him due credit. After all, what good could we possibly accomplish without Jehovah's help? (1 Cor. 1:26-31) When we are humble, we do not have to take credit for the good things we do for others. We are content with knowing that Jehovah sees and values what we do. (Compare Matthew 6:2-4; Heb. 13:16) Surely, we please Jehovah when we imitate Jesus in showing humility.—1 Pet. 5:6. *w23.04* 4 ¶9; 5 ¶11-12

**Friday, October 3**

*Look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.—Phil. 2:4.*

Under inspiration, the apostle Paul encouraged Christians to look out for the interests of others. How can we apply that counsel during meetings? By remembering that others, like us, want to participate. Think about it this way. When you are having a conversation with your friends, would you talk so much that they have little opportunity to speak? Of course not! You want them to share in the conversation. Similarly, at meetings, we want to allow as many as possible to comment. In fact, one of the best ways to encourage our brothers and sisters is by giving them a chance to express their faith. (1 Cor. 10:24) So keep our comments brief, thus allowing time for more to participate. Even when you give a short comment, avoid talking about too many points. If you cover everything in the paragraph, there will be little left for others to say. *w23.04* 22-23 ¶11-13

**Saturday, October 4**

*I do all things for the sake of the good news, in order to share it with others. —1 Cor. 9:23.*

We must remember how important it is to continue helping others, especially through our Christian ministry. In our ministry, we need to be flexible. We meet people who have different beliefs and attitudes and who come from a variety of backgrounds. The apostle Paul was adaptable, and we can learn from his example. Jesus appointed Paul as "an apostle to the nations." (Rom. 11:13) In that role, Paul preached to Jews, Greeks, intellectuals, humble peasants, dignitaries, and kings. In order to reach the hearts of such a diverse audience, Paul became "all things to people of all sorts." (1 Cor. 9:19-22) He paid attention to the culture, background, and beliefs of his audience and adapted his approach accordingly. We too can be more effective in our ministry if we are resourceful and adjust our approach to fit the needs of our listeners. *w23.07* 23 ¶11-12

**Sunday, October 5**

*A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all.—2 Tim. 2:24.*

Mildness is a strength, not a weakness. It takes inner strength to keep calm when facing a trying situation. Mildness is one aspect of "the fruitage of the spirit." (Gal. 5:22, 23) A form of the Greek word rendered "mildness" was at times used to describe a wild horse that had been tamed. Picture a wild horse that becomes gentle. That is, gentle, yet strong. As humans, how can we develop mildness and at the same time be strong? Not by sheer willpower. A key is praying for God's spirit, asking him to help us cultivate this beautiful quality. Experience shows that this can be done. Many Witnesses have responded mildly when confronted by opposers, leaving a favorable impression on observers.—2 Tim. 2:24, 25. *w23.09* 15 ¶3

**Monday, October 6**

*I prayed, and Jehovah granted my petition that I asked of him. —1 Sam. 1:27.*

In an awe-inspiring vision, the apostle John saw 24 elders in the heavens worshipping Jehovah. They praised God, acknowledging that he is worthy to receive "the glory and the honor and the power." (Rev. 4:10, 11) Faithful angels also have a multitude of reasons to praise and honor Jehovah. They are in heaven with him and have come to know him well. They see his qualities revealed in what he does. As they observe Jehovah in action, they are moved to praise him. (Job 38:4-7) We too want to include praise to Jehovah in our prayers, expressing what we love and appreciate about him. As you read and study the Bible, try to identify the qualities manifested by Jehovah that especially appeal to you. (Job 37:23; Rom. 11:33) Then tell Jehovah how you feel about those qualities. We can also praise Jehovah for acting in our behalf and in behalf of our entire spiritual family.—1 Sam. 2: 1, 2. *w23.05* 3-4 ¶6-7

**Tuesday, October 7**

*Walk worthily of Jehovah.*
*—Col. 1:10.*

In 1919, Babylon the Great lost its hold over God's people. That year, a "faithful and discreet slave" came on the scene, just in time to welcome honesthearted ones to the newly opened "Way of Holiness." (Matt. 24:45-47; Isa. 35:8) Thanks in part to the faithful "road workers" of the past, those setting foot on that highway could increase their knowledge of Jehovah's purposes. (Prov. 4:18) They could also bring their life into harmony with Jehovah's requirements. Jehovah has not expected his people to make the necessary changes all at once. Rather, he has refined his people over time. How happy we will all be when we are able to please our God in everything we do! Every road needs regular maintenance. Since 1919, roadwork on "the Way of Holiness" has continued, with a view to making it possible for more people to leave Babylon the Great. *w23.05* 17 ¶15; 19 ¶16

**Wednesday, October 8**

*I will never leave you.—Heb. 13:5.*

The Governing Body has personally been training helpers to the various committees of the Governing Body. These helpers are right now faithfully carrying a heavy load of responsibility. They are well-prepared to continue the work of caring for Christ's sheep. When the last of the anointed are taken to heaven near the end of the great tribulation, pure worship will keep right on going here on earth. Thanks to the leadership of Jesus Christ, God's worshippers will not miss a beat. True, at that time, we will be under attack by Gog of Magog, a hostile coalition of nations. (Ezek. 38:18-20) But that brief attack will fail; it will not stop God's people from worshipping Jehovah. He will surely rescue them! In a vision, the apostle John saw the "great crowd" of Christ's other sheep. John was told that this "great crowd" comes "out of the great tribulation." (Rev. 7:9, 14) Yes, they will be kept safe! *w24.02* 5-6 ¶13-14

**Thursday, October 9**

*Do not put out the fire of the spirit.*
*—1 Thess. 5:19.*

What can we do to receive holy spirit? We can pray for it, study God's inspired Word, and associate with his spirit-directed organization. Doing so will help us to cultivate "the fruitage of the spirit." (Gal. 5:22, 23) God grants his spirit only to those who maintain clean thinking and clean conduct. He would not continue to give us his spirit if we were to harbor unclean thoughts and act on them. (1 Thess. 4:7, 8) To keep receiving holy spirit, we must also "not treat prophecies with contempt." (1 Thess. 5:20) "Prophecies" here refer to messages produced by God's spirit, including those concerning Jehovah's day and the urgency of our times. We do not push that day off in our mind, thinking that Armageddon will not happen in our lifetime. Instead, we keep it close in mind by maintaining right conduct and keeping busy with "deeds of godly devotion."—2 Pet. 3: 11, 12. *w23.06* 12 ¶13-14

**Friday, October 10**

*The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom.—Prov. 9:10.*

What should we as Christians do if a pornographic image shows up on our electronic device? We should immediately reject the image. We can be helped to take such action if we recall that our most treasured possession is our relationship with Jehovah. Actually, images that are not generally considered pornographic might be sexually arousing. Why avoid them? Because we do not want to take even a small step toward committing adultery in our heart. (Matt. 5:28, 29) An elder in Thailand named David says: "I ask myself: 'Even though the images may not be pornographic, will Jehovah be pleased if I keep looking at them?' This kind of reasoning helps me to act wisely." We are helped to act wisely by cultivating a healthy fear of displeasing Jehovah. Godly fear is "the beginning," or foundation, "of wisdom." *w23.06* 23 ¶12-13

**Saturday, October 11**

*Go, my people, enter your inner rooms.—Isa. 26:20.*

The "inner rooms" may refer to our congregations. During the great tribulation, we will find the protection that Jehovah promises as we remain united with fellow believers. Therefore, we must work hard now not just to tolerate our brothers and sisters but also to love them. Our survival may depend on it! "The great day of Jehovah" will bring distress on humankind. (Zeph. 1:14, 15) Jehovah's people will face hardships too. But if we prepare now, we will be able to stay calm and help others. We will endure any challenges that come our way. When our fellow believers suffer, we will do our best to give them relief by showing compassion and providing for their needs. And we will stick close to our brothers and sisters, whom we have already grown to love. Jehovah will then reward us with eternal life in a world where all disasters and tribulations will be forgotten.—Isa. 65:17. *w23.07* 7 ¶16-17

**Sunday, October 12**

[*Jehovah*] *will make you firm, he will make you strong, he will firmly ground you.—1 Pet. 5:10.*

God's Word often describes faithful men as powerful. But even the strongest among them did not always feel strong. For example, on some occasions King David felt that he was "as strong as a mountain," but on other occasions he "became terrified." (Ps. 30:7) Although Samson was exceptionally powerful when he was moved by God's spirit, he recognized that without the power that comes from God, he would "grow weak and become like all other men." (Judg. 14: 5, 6; 16:17) These faithful men were strong only because Jehovah gave them power. The apostle Paul acknowledged that he too needed power from Jehovah. (2 Cor. 12:9, 10) He contended with health problems. (Gal. 4:13, 14) At times, he also struggled to do the right thing. (Rom. 7: 18, 19) And sometimes he felt anxious and uncertain. (2 Cor. 1:8, 9) Yet, when Paul was weak, he became powerful. How? Jehovah gave Paul the power he lacked. He made Paul strong. *w23.10* 12 ¶1-2

**Monday, October 13**

*Jehovah sees into the heart.*
*—1 Sam. 16:7.*

If we at times struggle with feelings of worthlessness, we can remember that in his own way, Jehovah drew us to him. (John 6:44) He sees the good in us that we may not see in ourselves, and he knows our heart. (2 Chron. 6: 30) So we can trust him when he says that we are precious. (1 John 3:19, 20) Before learning the truth, some of us did things that may still fill us with guilt. (1 Pet. 4:3) Even faithful Christians battle against sinful inclinations. Does your heart condemn you? If so, take comfort in knowing that faithful servants of Jehovah have struggled with similar feelings. For example, the apostle Paul felt miserable when reflecting on his imperfections. (Rom. 7: 24) Of course, Paul had repented of his sins and got baptized. Still, he referred to himself as "the least of the apostles" and the "foremost" sinner. —1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Tim. 1:15. *w24.03* 27 ¶5-6

**Tuesday, October 14**

*They abandoned the house of Jehovah.—2 Chron. 24:18.*

One lesson we can learn from King Jehoash's bad decision is that we need to choose friends who will be a good influence on us—friends who love Jehovah and who want to make him happy. We do not need to limit our association to those in our own age group. Remember, Jehoash was much younger than his friend Jehoiada. Regarding your choice of friends, ask yourself: 'Do they help me to strengthen my faith in Jehovah? Are they encouraging me to live by God's standards? Do they talk about Jehovah and his valuable truths? Do they show respect for God's standards? Do they just tell me what I might want to hear, or do they have the courage to correct me if I stray?' (Prov. 27:5, 6, 17) Frankly, if your friends do not love Jehovah, you do not need them. But if you have friends who love Jehovah, hang on to them—they will be good for you!—Prov. 13:20. *w23.09* 9-10 ¶6-7

**Wednesday, October 15**

*I am the Alpha and the Omega.*
*—Rev. 1:8.*

The letter alpha begins the Greek alphabet, and the letter omega concludes it. By using the description "the Alpha and the Omega," Jehovah indicates that when he starts something, he brings it to its successful conclusion. After Jehovah created Adam and Eve, He said to them: "Be fruitful and become many, fill the earth and subdue it." (Gen. 1:28) At that moment, Jehovah, in effect, said "Alpha." He clearly stated his purpose: The time would come when perfect, obedient descendants of Adam and Eve would fill the earth and transform it into a paradise. At that future time, Jehovah will, in a sense, say "Omega." After completing the creation of "the heavens and the earth and everything in them," Jehovah gave a guarantee. He guaranteed that he would without fail carry out his purpose for mankind and for the earth. It would be fully accomplished at the end of that seventh day.—Gen. 2:1-3. *w23.11* 5 ¶13-14

**Thursday, October 16**

*Clear up the way of Jehovah! Make a straight highway through the desert for our God.—Isa. 40:3.*

The difficult literal journey from Babylon to Israel could take about four months, but Jehovah promised that any obstacles that seemed to prevent their return would be cleared away. In the minds of faithful Jews, the benefits of returning to Israel far outweighed any sacrifices they would make. The greatest blessing involved their worship. There was no temple of Jehovah in Babylon. There was no altar where the Israelites could offer up the sacrifices required by the Mosaic Law, and there was no organized priesthood to offer those sacrifices. In addition, Jehovah's people were greatly outnumbered by pagan men and women, who had no regard for Jehovah or his standards. So God-fearing Jews—thousands of them—were looking forward to returning to their homeland where they could restore pure worship. *w23.05* 14-15 ¶3-4

**Friday, October 17**

*Go on walking as children of light. —Eph. 5:8.*

We need the help of God's holy spirit so that we can keep conducting ourselves "as children of light." Why? Because it is a definite challenge to remain clean in this immoral world. (1 Thess. 4:3-5, 7, 8) Holy spirit can help us to combat the thinking of the world, including its philosophies and viewpoints that conflict with God's thinking. Holy spirit can also help us to produce "every sort of goodness and righteousness." (Eph. 5:9) One way we can receive holy spirit is by praying for it. Jesus said that Jehovah will "give holy spirit to those asking him." (Luke 11:13) And when we praise Jehovah together at Christian meetings, we also receive holy spirit. (Eph. 5:19, 20) The wholesome influence of God's holy spirit will help us to live in a way that pleases God. *w24.03* 23-24 ¶13-15

**Saturday, October 18**

*Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you.—Luke 11:9.*

Do you need more patience? If so, pray for it. Patience is an aspect of the fruitage of the spirit. (Gal. 5:22, 23) So we can pray for holy spirit and ask Jehovah to help us cultivate its fruitage. If we face a situation that tests our patience, we "keep on asking" for holy spirit to help us be patient. (Luke 11:13) We can also ask Jehovah to help us see matters from his point of view. Then after praying, we need to do our best to be patient each day. The more we pray for patience and strive to be patient, the more this quality will take root in our heart and become part of our personality. It also helps to meditate on Bible examples. The Bible contains many examples of people who were patient. By meditating on those accounts, we can learn ways to demonstrate patience. *w23.08* 22 ¶10-11

**Sunday, October 19**

*Let down your nets for a catch. —Luke 5:4.*

Jesus assured the apostle Peter of Jehovah's support. The resurrected Jesus provided Peter and his fellow apostles with another miraculous catch of fish. (John 21:4-6) This miracle no doubt reassured Peter that Jehovah could easily supply the material things he needed. Perhaps the apostle then recalled Jesus' words that Jehovah would provide for those who keep "seeking first the Kingdom." (Matt. 6: 33) In line with that, Peter made the ministry, not the fishing business, his priority. He gave a bold witness on the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., helping thousands to accept the good news. (Acts 2:14, 37-41) He thereafter helped the Samaritans and the Gentiles to accept Christ. (Acts 8:14-17; 10:44-48) Jehovah certainly used Peter in a mighty way to bring people of all sorts into the congregation. *w23.09* 20 ¶1; 23 ¶11

**Monday, October 20**

*If you do not make the dream known to me, along with its interpretation, you will be dismembered.—Dan. 2:5.*

About two years after the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a disturbing dream about an immense image. He threatened to kill all his wise men, including Daniel, if they could not tell him what he had dreamed and also give the interpretation. (Dan. 2:3-5) Daniel had to act quickly; otherwise, lives would be lost. He "went in and asked the king to grant him time to tell the interpretation to the king." (Dan. 2:16) That took courage and faith. There is no record that Daniel had ever interpreted dreams before. He asked his companions "to pray for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this secret." (Dan. 2: 18) Jehovah answered those prayers. With God's help, Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Daniel's life and the lives of his companions were spared. *w23.08* 3 ¶4

**Tuesday, October 21**

*The one who has endured to the end will be saved.—Matt. 24:13.*

Consider the benefits of being patient. When we are patient, we are happier and calmer. Thus, patience can improve our mental and physical health. When we are patient with others, we enjoy better relationships with them. Our congregation becomes more united. If someone provokes us, our being slow to anger can prevent the situation from getting worse. (Ps. 37:8, ftn.; Prov. 14:29) But most of all, we imitate our heavenly Father and draw even closer to him. What an appealing and beneficial quality patience is! While we may not always find it easy to be patient, with Jehovah's help, we can continue to cultivate this quality. And as we patiently wait for the new world, we can be confident that "the eye of Jehovah watches over those fearing him, those waiting for his loyal love." (Ps. 33:18) May we all be determined to continue clothing ourselves with patience. *w23.08* 22 ¶7; 25 ¶16-17

**Wednesday, October 22**

*Faith by itself, without works, is dead.—Jas. 2:17.*

James pointed out that a man might claim to have faith, but where are his corresponding works? (Jas. 2:1-5, 9) James also mentioned someone who saw 'a brother or a sister lacking clothing or food' but did not provide practical help. Even if that one claimed to have faith, it was not backed up by actions; therefore, it was useless. (Jas. 2:14-16) James referred to Rahab as a positive example of faith in action. (Jas. 2:25, 26) She had heard about Jehovah and recognized that he was supporting the Israelites. (Josh. 2: 9-11) She showed her faith by her actions—she protected two Israelite spies when their lives were in danger. As a result, this imperfect, non-Israelite woman was declared righteous, just as Abraham had been. The example she set emphasizes the importance of having faith backed up by works. *w23.12* 5-6 ¶12-13

**Thursday, October 23**

*May you be rooted and established on the foundation.—Eph. 3:17.*

As Christians, we are not content with having only a superficial understanding of the Bible. With the help of God's holy spirit, we are eager to learn "even the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:9, 10) Why not start a personal study project that will draw you closer to Jehovah? For example, you could explore how he demonstrated his love for his ancient servants and how that proves that he loves you too. You might examine Jehovah's arrangement for worship in Israel and how that compares with the Christian arrangement today. Or perhaps you could make an in-depth study of the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled during his life and ministry on earth. You can find a lot of joy in studying such subjects with the help of the *Watch Tower Publications Index* or the *Research Guide for Jehovah's Witnesses*. Doing deep Bible study can strengthen your faith and help you "find the knowledge of God."—Prov. 2:4, 5. *w23.10* 18-19 ¶3-5

**Friday, October 24**

*Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.—1 Pet. 4:8.*

The word the apostle Peter used for "intense" literally means "stretched out." The second part of the verse describes the effect that intense love can have. It covers the sins of our brothers. We could picture it this way: We grasp our love with both hands, as if it were an extendable piece of fabric, and stretch it out more and more until it covers, not one, not two, but "a multitude of sins." To cover is a descriptive way of saying to forgive. Just as a piece of fabric can cover a stain, love can cover the weaknesses and imperfections of others. Our love for others should be strong enough that we can forgive the imperfections of our fellow believers—even if that requires considerable effort at times. (Col. 3:13) When we succeed in forgiving others, we show that our love is strong and that we want to please Jehovah. *w23.11* 11-12 ¶13-15

**Saturday, October 25**

*Shaphan began to read from it before the king.—2 Chron. 34:18.*

As an adult, King Josiah began to have the temple renovated. During that work, "the book of Jehovah's Law given through Moses" was found. On hearing it read, the king was moved to take action by complying with what it said. (2 Chron. 34: 14, 19-21) Would you like to read the Bible regularly? If you are trying, how is it going? Do you keep track of verses that may help you personally? When Josiah was about 39 years old, he made a mistake that cost him his life. He trusted in himself instead of asking Jehovah for guidance. (2 Chron. 35:20-25) There is a lesson here. No matter how old we are or how long we have been studying the Bible, we must keep searching for Jehovah. That involves regularly praying for his guidance, studying his Word, and benefiting from the advice of mature Christians. We will then be less likely to make big mistakes and more likely to be happy.—Jas. 1:25. *w23.09* 12 ¶15-16

**Sunday, October 26**

*God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones.—Jas. 4:6.*

The Bible mentions many remarkable women who loved Jehovah and served him. They were "moderate in habits" and "faithful in all things." (1 Tim. 3:11) In addition, sisters can find in their own congregation examples of mature Christian women who are worthy of imitation. Young sisters, why not identify a few mature Christian women you know whose example you can imitate? Note their appealing qualities; then consider how you can manifest them. An important aspect of Christian maturity is humility. If a woman is humble, she will enjoy a good relationship with Jehovah and with others. For example, a woman who loves Jehovah humbly chooses to support the principle of headship that her heavenly Father established. (1 Cor. 11:3) That principle has specific applications in the congregation and in the family arrangement. *w23.12* 18-19 ¶3-5

**Monday, October 27**

*Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.—Eph. 5:28.*

Jehovah expects a husband to love his wife and to care for her physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Developing thinking ability, having respect for women, and being reliable, will help you as a marriage mate. After you have married, you may become a father. What can you learn from Jehovah about being a good father? (Eph. 6:4) Jehovah openly told his Son, Jesus, that he loved him and approved of him. (Matt. 3:17) If you become a father, make sure that you regularly assure your children that you love them. Generously commend them for the good things that they do. Fathers who imitate Jehovah's example help their children to develop into mature Christian men and women. You can prepare now for this role by lovingly caring for others in your family and in the congregation and by learning to express your love and appreciation for them.—John 15:9. *w23.12* 28-29 ¶17-18

**Tuesday, October 28**

[*Jehovah*] *is the stability of your times.—Isa. 33:6.*

As faithful servants of Jehovah, we face difficulties and infirmities that are common to all mankind. We may also have to endure opposition or persecution from those who hate God's people. Though Jehovah does not shield us from such hardships, he does promise to help us. (Isa. 41: 10) With his assistance, we can maintain our joy, make good decisions, and stay loyal to him even through the most difficult situations. Jehovah promises to give us what the Bible calls "the peace of God." (Phil. 4: 6, 7) This peace refers to the calmness and tranquility of mind and heart that result from our precious relationship with him. This peace "surpasses all understanding"; it is more wonderful than we can imagine. Have you ever felt surprisingly calm after praying fervently to Jehovah? That feeling is "the peace of God." *w24.01* 20 ¶2; 21 ¶4

**Wednesday, October 29**

*Let me praise Jehovah; let everything within me praise his holy name. —Ps. 103:1.*

Love for God moves faithful people to praise his name wholeheartedly. King David understood that to praise Jehovah's name is to praise Jehovah himself. Jehovah's name involves his reputation, so it brings to mind all his beautiful qualities and his marvelous deeds. David wanted to treat his Father's name as holy and to praise it. He wanted to do so with "everything within" him—that is, wholeheartedly. Similarly, the Levites took the lead in praising Jehovah. They humbly admitted that their words could never fully express the praise that Jehovah's sacred name deserves. (Neh. 9:5) Without a doubt, such humble, heartfelt praise brought joy to Jehovah's heart. *w24.02* 9 ¶6

**Thursday, October 30**

*To the extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.—Phil. 3:16.*

Jehovah will not consider you a failure for not achieving a goal that was out of your reach. (2 Cor. 8:12) View the setback as a learning experience. Keep in mind what you have already achieved. The Bible says that "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work." (Heb. 6:10) So neither should you forget. Reflect on what you have already accomplished—be it developing a friendship with Jehovah, speaking to others about him, or getting baptized. Just as you have progressed and reached spiritual goals in the past, you can continue to progress toward your current goal. With Jehovah's help, you can reach your goal. As you continue working toward your spiritual goal, do not forget to enjoy seeing how Jehovah helps and blesses you along the way. (2 Cor. 4:7) If you do not give up, you will receive even greater blessings.—Gal. 6:9. *w23.05* 31 ¶16-18

**Friday, October 31**

*The Father himself has affection for you, because you have had affection for me and have believed that I came as God's representative.—John 16:27.*

Jehovah loves to express warm approval of those for whom he has affection. The Scriptures report two occasions when He told Jesus that he was His beloved, approved Son. (Matt. 3: 17; 17:5) Would you like to hear Jehovah reassure you of his approval? Jehovah does not speak to us audibly, but he speaks to us through the pages of his Word. We can "hear" Jehovah's voice of approval when we read Jesus' words in the Gospels. Jesus perfectly reflected his Father's personality. So when we read that Jesus expressed his approval of his imperfect but faithful followers, we can picture Jehovah saying those words to us. (John 15:9, 15) If trials occur, they do not mean that we have lost God's approval. Rather, they provide us with opportunities to prove the depth of our love for God and our trust in him.—Jas. 1: 12. *w24.03* 28 ¶10-11

**Saturday, November 1**

*Out of the mouth of children and infants, you have brought forth praise. —Matt. 21:16.*

If you are a parent, help your young ones to prepare comments appropriate to their age. At times, serious matters, such as marital problems or moral issues, are considered during a study, but there will probably be a paragraph or two that a child can comment on. Also, help your children understand why they will not likely be called on every time they raise their hand. Explaining this can prevent them from being disappointed when others are chosen instead of them. (1 Tim. 6:18) All of us can prepare upbuilding comments that honor Jehovah and encourage our fellow Christians. (Prov. 25:11) While we may occasionally offer a brief personal experience, we should refrain from talking too much about ourselves. (Prov. 27:2; 2 Cor. 10:18) Instead, we endeavor to keep the focus on Jehovah, his Word, and his people as a whole. —Rev. 4:11. *w23.04* 24-25 ¶17-18

**Sunday, November 2**

*Let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and keep our senses. —1 Thess. 5:6.*

Love is essential to stay awake and keep our senses. (Matt. 22:37-39) Love for God helps us to endure in preaching despite any trouble this might bring on us. (2 Tim. 1:7, 8) Because our love extends to those who do not share our faith, we keep preaching, even witnessing by telephone and by letter. We do not give up hope that one day our neighbors will change and begin to do what is right. (Ezek. 18:27, 28) Our love of neighbor includes fellow Christians. We show such love by "encouraging one another and building one another up." (1 Thess. 5:11) Like soldiers serving side by side in combat, we encourage one another. We would never knowingly hurt our brothers and sisters or repay injury for injury. (1 Thess. 5:13, 15) We also show our love by respecting the brothers who are presiding over the congregation.—1 Thess. 5:12. *w23.06* 10 ¶6; 11 ¶10-11

**Monday, November 3**

*When [Jehovah] says something, will he not do it?—Num. 23:19.*

One way we can strengthen our faith is by meditating on the ransom. The ransom is a guarantee that God's promises will come true. When we carefully reflect on why the ransom was provided and what it involved, we strengthen our faith that God's promise of endless life in a better world is sure to be fulfilled. Why can we say that? Well, what did the ransom involve? Jehovah sent his beloved firstborn Son, his closest companion, from heaven to be born as a perfect human. While on earth, Jesus endured all kinds of hardships. Then he suffered and died a painful death. What a high price Jehovah paid! Our loving God would never have allowed his Son to suffer and die just to provide a better but very brief life for us. (John 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19) Having paid so high a price, Jehovah will see to it that unending life in the new world becomes a reality. *w23.04* 27 ¶8-9

**Tuesday, November 4**

*Where are your stings, O Death? —Hos. 13:14.*

Does Jehovah have the desire to resurrect the dead? Without question, he does. He inspired a number of Bible writers to record his promise of a future resurrection. (Isa. 26:19; Rev. 20:11-13) And when Jehovah makes a promise, he always fulfills it. (Josh. 23:14) Jehovah is, in fact, eager to restore the dead to life. Consider the words of the patriarch Job. He was sure that even if he died, Jehovah would yearn to see him live again. (Job 14:14, 15, ftn.) Jehovah has the same longing for all his worshippers who have died. He is eager to bring them back to life, healthy and happy. What about the billions who have died without having a chance to learn the truth about Jehovah? Our loving God wants to resurrect them too. (Acts 24: 15) He wants them to have the opportunity to become his friends and live forever on earth.—John 3:16. *w23.04* 9 ¶5-6

**Wednesday, November 5**

*By God we will gain power. —Ps. 108:13.*

How can you strengthen your hope? If, for example, you have the hope to live forever on earth, read about the Bible's description of the Paradise and meditate on it. (Isa. 25:8; 32:16-18) Reflect on what life will be like in the new world. Imagine yourself there. If we keep the hope of the new world firmly in mind, our problems will be "momentary and light." (2 Cor. 4:17) Through the hope Jehovah has given you, he will make you strong. He has already provided what you need to receive strength from him. So when you need help to fulfill an assignment, to endure a trial, or to maintain your joy, approach Jehovah in earnest prayer and seek his guidance through personal study. Accept encouragement from your Christian brothers and sisters. Keep your hope clear and bright. Then you will be "strengthened with all power according to [God's] glorious might so that you may endure fully with patience and joy."—Col. 1:11. *w23.10* 17 ¶19-20

**Thursday, November 6**

*Give thanks for everything.*
*—1 Thess. 5:18.*

We have many reasons to thank Jehovah in prayer. We can thank him for any good thing that we have; after all, every good gift comes from him. (Jas. 1:17) For example, we can express our appreciation for the beauty of the earth and the marvels of creation. We can also express gratitude for our life, our family, our friends, and our hope. And we want to thank Jehovah for allowing us to enjoy his precious friendship. We may need to make a special effort to think about the reasons that we personally have to be grateful to Jehovah. We live in an unthankful world. People are often focused on what they want rather than on what they can do to show appreciation for what they have. If that attitude were to rub off on us, our prayers could become a list of requests. To prevent that from happening, we need to continue to cultivate and express appreciation for all that Jehovah does for us.—Luke 6:45. *w23.05* 4 ¶8-9

**Friday, November 7**

*Keep asking in faith, not doubting at all.—Jas. 1:6.*

As our loving Father, Jehovah does not like to see us in pain. (Isa. 63:9) Still, he does not prevent all our trials, which can be likened to rivers or flames. (Isa. 43:2) However, he does promise to help us "pass through" them. And he will not allow our trials to cause us permanent harm. Jehovah also gives us his powerful holy spirit to help us endure. (Luke 11:13; Phil. 4:13) As a result, we can be confident that we will always have exactly what we need in order to endure and to remain faithful to him. Jehovah expects us to trust in him. (Heb. 11:6) At times, our trials may seem insurmountable. We might even begin to doubt whether Jehovah will help us. But the Bible assures us that by God's power we can "scale a wall." (Ps. 18:29) So instead of giving in to our doubts, we should pray in full faith, trusting that Jehovah will answer our prayers.—Jas. 1:6, 7. *w23.11* 22 ¶8-9

**Saturday, November 8**

[*Love's*] *flames are a blazing fire, the flame of Jah. Surging waters cannot extinguish love, nor can rivers wash it away.—Song of Sol. 8:6, 7.*

What a beautiful description of true love! These words contain a reassuring truth for married couples: You can have unfailing love for each other. Whether a married couple will have unfailing love as long as they live depends on them. To illustrate, a campfire has the potential to burn indefinitely—but only if it is fed. If left unattended, the fire will eventually go out. Likewise, the love between a husband and wife can remain strong indefinitely—but only if they nurture their relationship. At times, a couple could feel that their love is cooling off, especially when they are weighed down by financial hardship, health concerns, or the pressures of raising children. So to keep "the flame of Jah" alive, both husband and wife should work to have a strong relationship with Jehovah. *w23.05* 20-21 ¶1-3

**Sunday, November 9**

*Do not be afraid.—Dan. 10:19.*

To develop courage, what do we need to do? Our parents may urge us to be courageous, but they cannot pass this quality on to us as if it were a family heirloom. Gaining courage is like learning a new skill. One way you can master the skill is by closely watching the instructor's actions and then copying his example. In a similar way, we learn to be courageous by closely looking at how others show this quality and then copying their example. Like Daniel, we need to know God's Word well. We must form a close bond with Jehovah by talking to him freely and often. And we need to trust in Jehovah, being convinced that we have his backing. Then when our faith is tested, we will be courageous. Courageous people often gain the respect of others. They may also attract honesthearted people to Jehovah. Certainly, we have good reasons to develop courage. *w23.08* 2 ¶2; 4 ¶8-9

**Monday, November 10**

*Make sure of all things.*
*—1 Thess. 5:21.*

The Greek word rendered "make sure of" was used in connection with testing precious metals. Thus, we need to test what we hear or what we read to determine whether it is genuine. This will be even more important for us as the great tribulation approaches. Instead of naively accepting what others say, we use our thinking ability to compare what we read or what we hear with what the Bible and Jehovah's organization say. In doing so, we will not be fooled by any demonic propaganda or trickery. (Prov. 14:15; 1 Tim. 4:1) As a group, God's servants will survive the great tribulation. Individually, though, we do not know what tomorrow will bring. (Jas. 4: 14) Still, whether we live through the great tribulation or die before then, we will be rewarded with everlasting life if we remain faithful. May we all focus on our wonderful hope and keep ready for Jehovah's day! *w23.06* 13 ¶15-16

**Tuesday, November 11**

*He has revealed his confidential matter to his servants.—Amos 3:7.*

We do not know how some Bible prophecies will be fulfilled. (Dan. 12: 8, 9) But just because we do not fully comprehend how a prophecy will be fulfilled does not mean that it will not come true. Without a doubt, we can trust that Jehovah will reveal to us what we need to know at exactly the right time, just as he did in the past. A proclamation of "peace and security" will be made. (1 Thess. 5:3) Then the world's political powers will turn on false religion and wipe it out. (Rev. 17:16, 17) They will then attack God's people. (Ezek. 38:18, 19) These events will lead directly to the final war of Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14, 16) We can be certain that these events will shortly take place. Until then, let us continue to show our appreciation to our loving heavenly Father by paying attention to Bible prophecy and by helping others to do the same. *w23.08* 13 ¶19-20

**Wednesday, November 12**

*Let us continue loving one another, because love is from God. —1 John 4:7.*

When the apostle Paul was discussing faith, hope, and love, he concluded by saying that "the greatest of these [qualities] is love." (1 Cor. 13:13) Why could Paul say this? In the future, we will no longer need to have faith in God's promises about his new world or hope that those promises will be fulfilled because they will already be realized. But we will always need to have love for Jehovah and for people. In fact, our love for them will keep growing forever. Also, love identifies us as true Christians. Jesus told his apostles: "By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) Further, having love for one another keeps us united. Paul called love "a perfect bond of union." (Col. 3:14) The apostle John wrote to fellow believers: "Whoever loves God must also love his brother." (1 John 4:21) When we show love for one another, we show our love for God. *w23.11* 8 ¶1, 3

**Thursday, November 13**

*Throw off every weight.—Heb. 12:1.*

The Bible compares our life as Christians to a race. The runners who successfully cross the finish line are rewarded with everlasting life. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8) We need to make every effort to keep on running, especially because the finish line is closer than ever. The apostle Paul identified what will help us to win the race. He directed us to "throw off every weight and . . . run with endurance the race that is set before us." Did Paul mean that there was no load a Christian should carry? No, that was not his point. Rather, he meant that we need to get rid of every unnecessary weight. This type of weight could hinder us and cause us to tire out. To endure, we must quickly identify and discard any unnecessary weight that could slow us down. At the same time, however, we do not want to cast aside loads that we should carry. Otherwise, we could disqualify ourselves from the race. —2 Tim. 2:5. *w23.08* 26 ¶1-2

**Friday, November 14**

*Do not let your adornment be external.—1 Pet. 3:3.*

Reasonableness helps us to respect the views of others. For example, some of our sisters like to wear makeup, whereas others prefer not to. Some Christians enjoy drinking alcohol in moderation, but others decide to abstain from it. All Christians desire good health but choose different methods of health care. If we felt so strongly about our own choices that we tried to promote them in the congregation, we could stumble others and cause divisions. (1 Cor. 8:9; 10:23, 24) For instance, instead of strictly regulating the way we dress, Jehovah has given us principles to follow. We are to dress in a way that is appropriate for ministers of God, showing reasonableness, modesty, and "soundness of mind." (1 Tim. 2:9, 10) Therefore, we do not draw undue attention to ourselves by how we dress. Bible principles will also help elders to avoid setting arbitrary rules about clothing and hairstyles. *w23.07* 23-24 ¶13-14

**Saturday, November 15**

*Listen intently to me, and eat what is good, and you will find great delight in what is truly rich.—Isa. 55:2.*

Jehovah has laid the basis for us to enjoy a blessed outcome. Those responding to the invitation from the loud and "stupid woman" focus on enjoying "sweet," secret pleasures. Their outcome is in "the depths of the Grave." (Prov. 9:13, 17, 18) How different it is for those who accept the invitation from "true wisdom"! (Prov. 9:1) We are learning to love what Jehovah loves and to hate what he hates. (Ps. 97:10) And we find satisfaction in inviting others to benefit from "true wisdom." It is as if we were to "call out from the heights above the city: 'Whoever is inexperienced, let him come in here.'" The benefits for us and for those who respond are not just for the here and now. They are enduring, allowing us to "live" forever as we "walk forward in the way of understanding."—Prov. 9: 3, 4, 6. *w23.06* 24 ¶17-18

**Sunday, November 16**

*The one slow to anger is better than a mighty man, and the one controlling his temper than one conquering a city. —Prov. 16:32.*

How do you feel when a workmate or a schoolmate asks you about your beliefs? Do you feel nervous? Most of us do. But such a question may offer insight into the other person's thinking or beliefs, giving us an opportunity to share the good news. At times, though, a person may raise a question in a challenging manner. That should not surprise us. After all, some have been misinformed about our beliefs. (Acts 28:22) Furthermore, we are living in "the last days," a time when many are "not open to any agreement" and are even "fierce." (2 Tim. 3:1, 3) You may wonder, 'How can I be gentle and gracious when someone challenges my Bible-based beliefs?' What will help you? In a word—mildness. A mild person does not get easily upset but is able to control himself when faced with frustrations and uncertainties. *w23.09* 14 ¶1-2

**Monday, November 17**

*You will appoint them as princes in all the earth.—Ps. 45:16.*

At times, we receive counsel that safeguards us from such things as materialism and activities that can put us in danger of breaking God's laws. Here, too, we are blessed by following the guidance Jehovah provides. (Isa. 48: 17, 18; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10) No doubt Jehovah will continue to use human representatives to provide guidance during the great tribulation and on into the Thousand Year Reign. Will we keep following that direction? Much may depend on how we respond to the guidance that Jehovah is providing now. Therefore, let us always follow Jehovah's guidance, including that which is provided by the men who are appointed to watch over us. (Isa. 32:1, 2; Heb. 13:17) And as we do, we have every reason to trust in our Guide, Jehovah, who leads us away from spiritual danger and toward our destination—everlasting life in the new world. *w24.02* 25 ¶17-18

**Tuesday, November 18**

*By undeserved kindness you have been saved.—Eph. 2:5.*

The apostle Paul enjoyed a satisfying life in Jehovah's service, but he had many challenges to overcome. Paul often traveled long distances, and travel was not easy in those days. On his journeys, Paul was sometimes "in dangers from rivers" and "in dangers from robbers." He was also occasionally subjected to physical mistreatment from opposers. (2 Cor. 11:23-27) And Paul's Christian brothers did not always show appreciation for his sincere efforts to help them. (2 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 4:15) What helped Paul to keep going in Jehovah's service? Paul learned much about Jehovah's personality from the Scriptures and from his own experiences. Paul became convinced that Jehovah God loved him. (Rom. 8:38, 39; Eph. 2:4, 5) And he came to love Jehovah very much. Paul showed his love for Jehovah "by ministering and continuing to minister to the holy ones." —Heb. 6:10. *w23.07* 9 ¶5-6

**Wednesday, November 19**

*Be in subjection to the superior authorities.—Rom. 13:1.*

Many people acknowledge that we need the secular governments and that we should obey at least some of the laws set by these "superior authorities." But those same people may hesitate to obey a law that seems unfair or appears to require too much. The Bible acknowledges that human governments cause suffering, are under Satan's control, and will soon be destroyed. (Ps. 110:5, 6; Eccl. 8:9; Luke 4:5, 6) It also tells us that "whoever opposes the authority has taken a stand against the arrangement of God." Our relative subjection to the superior authorities is part of Jehovah's temporary arrangement to maintain order. Therefore, we must "render to all their dues," including taxes, respect, and obedience. (Rom. 13:1-7) We may view a law as being inconvenient, unfair, or costly to obey. But we obey Jehovah, and he tells us to obey these authorities as long as they do not ask us to break his commands. —Acts 5:29. *w23.10* 8 ¶9-10

**Thursday, November 20**

*Jehovah's spirit empowered him. —Judg. 15:14.*

When Samson was born, the Philistines were ruling over the nation of Israel and oppressing it. (Judg. 13:1) Their harsh rulership brought great suffering to the Israelites. Jehovah chose Samson to "take the lead in saving Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." (Judg. 13:5) To fulfill this challenging assignment, Samson would have to rely on Jehovah. On one occasion, a Philistine military force had come to capture Samson at Lehi, evidently in Judah. The men of Judah were afraid, so they decided to hand Samson over to the enemy. Samson's own people bound him securely with two new ropes and brought him to the Philistines. (Judg. 15:9-13) However, "Jehovah's spirit empowered" Samson and he freed himself from the ropes. He then "found a fresh jawbone of a male donkey," picked it up, and used it to strike down 1,000 Philistine men! —Judg. 15:14-16. *w23.09* 2 ¶3-4

**Friday, November 21**

*This is according to the eternal purpose that he formed in connection with the Christ, Jesus our Lord. —Eph. 3:11.*

Jehovah has progressively revealed his "eternal purpose" in the Bible. One way or another, he always succeeds because he "has made everything work for his purpose." (Prov. 16:4) And the results of what Jehovah does will endure forever. What is Jehovah's purpose, and what adjustments has he made in order to accomplish it? God told the first humans what his purpose was for them. They were to "be fruitful and become many, fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection . . . every living creature" on earth. (Gen. 1:28) When Adam and Eve rebelled, causing sin to enter the human family, Jehovah's purpose was not thwarted. He adjusted the way it would be achieved. Immediately, he determined to set up a Kingdom in heaven that would accomplish his original purpose for mankind and the earth.—Matt. 25: 34. *w23.10* 20 ¶6-7

**Saturday, November 22**

*If Jehovah had not been my helper, I would soon have perished. —Ps. 94:17.*

Jehovah can help us to persevere. It may be a struggle to carry on, especially if we are coping with a persistent weakness. At times, our weaknesses may seem more challenging than those that the apostle Peter faced. But Jehovah can give us the strength not to give up. (Ps. 94:18, 19) For example, one brother engaged in a homosexual lifestyle for a number of years before learning the truth. He decisively left those immoral practices behind. Still, he at times struggled with wrong desires. What helped him to persevere? He explains: "Jehovah strengthens us." He adds: "With Jehovah's spirit . . . , I have learned that it is possible to [continue] in the way of the truth . . . Jehovah has been able to use me, and despite my imperfections he continually strengthens me." *w23.09* 23 ¶12

**Sunday, November 23**

*The result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life.—Prov. 22:4.*

Young brothers, you will not automatically become a mature Christian man. You need to choose good examples to imitate, develop thinking ability, be reliable, acquire practical life skills, and prepare for future roles. You may at times feel overwhelmed when you contemplate the work ahead. But you can succeed. Remember that Jehovah is eager to help you. (Isa. 41:10, 13) Of course, your brothers and sisters in the congregation will help you too. When you reach your full potential as a mature Christian man, your life will be rich and satisfying. We love you, young brothers! May Jehovah richly bless you as you work now to become mature Christian men. *w23.12* 29 ¶19-20

**Monday, November 24**

*Overlook an offense.—Prov. 19:11.*

Imagine that you are at a gathering with a group of brothers and sisters. You are having a pleasant time and you take a group picture. In fact, you take two more pictures in case the first picture does not turn out well. Now you have three pictures. But in one of them, you notice that a brother is frowning. So you delete it because you have two other pictures in which everyone in the group, including that brother, is smiling. We usually have good memories of times spent with our brothers and sisters. But suppose that on one of those occasions, a brother or a sister says or does something that is unkind. What should we do with that memory? Why not try to delete it just as you would delete one of those pictures? (Eph. 4:32) We can afford to because we have many good memories of pleasant association with that individual. Those are the kinds of memories we want to keep and treasure. *w23.11* 12-13 ¶16-17

**Tuesday, November 25**

*Women should adorn themselves in appropriate dress, . . . in the way that is proper for women professing devotion to God.—1 Tim. 2:9, 10.*

The Greek words used here suggest that a Christian woman's dress would be respectable and would show consideration for the feelings or opinions of others. How we admire our mature Christian sisters for dressing modestly! Discernment is another quality that all mature Christian sisters demonstrate. What is discernment? It is good judgment—the ability to tell right from wrong and then to choose the wise course. Consider the example of Abigail. Her husband made a bad decision that was going to have a serious impact on his entire household. Abigail took immediate action. Her good judgment saved lives. (1 Sam. 25:14-23, 32-35) Discernment also helps us to know when to speak and when to keep silent. And it helps us to maintain balance when showing personal interest in others.—1 Thess. 4: 11. *w23.12* 20 ¶8-9

**Wednesday, November 26**

*Let us rejoice, based on hope of the glory of God.—Rom. 5:2.*

The apostle Paul wrote those words to the congregation in Rome. The brothers and sisters there had learned about Jehovah and Jesus, had exercised faith, and had become Christians. God thus "declared [them] righteous as a result of faith," and he anointed them with holy spirit. (Rom. 5:1) Yes, they gained a valid, wonderful hope. Paul later wrote to anointed Christians in Ephesus about the hope to which they were called. That hope included receiving "an inheritance for the holy ones." (Eph. 1:18) And Paul also indicated to the Colossians where their hope would be realized. He called it "the hope that is being reserved for you in the heavens." (Col. 1:4, 5) The hope of anointed Christians, then, is that they be resurrected to everlasting life in heaven, where they will reign with Christ.—1 Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:6. *w23.12* 9 ¶4-5

**Thursday, November 27**

*The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your mental powers.—Phil. 4:7.*

The original word for "guard" was a military expression and was used to refer to soldiers who guarded a city and kept it safe from attack. The inhabitants of a guarded city slept in peace, knowing that troops were posted at the gates. Similarly, when the peace of God guards our hearts and minds, we feel calm, knowing that we are safe. (Ps. 4:8) As in the case of Hannah, even if our situation does not change immediately, we can still feel a measure of peace. (1 Sam. 1: 16-18) And when we feel calm, we often find it easier to think clearly and make wise decisions. What can we do? When you are troubled, summon the guard, so to speak. How? Pray until you feel the peace of God. (Luke 11:9; 1 Thess. 5:17) If you are facing a crisis, persevere in prayer, and you will experience Jehovah's peace as it guards your heart and mind.—Rom. 12:12. *w24.01* 21 ¶5-6

**Friday, November 28**

*Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.—Matt. 6:9.*

To sanctify his Father's name, Jesus endured every torment, insult, and slander heaped on him. He knew that he had obeyed his Father in all things; he had nothing to be ashamed of. (Heb. 12:2) He also knew that Satan was directly attacking him in those dark hours. (Luke 22:2-4; 23:33, 34) Satan surely hoped to break Jesus' integrity; yet, Satan failed miserably! Jesus proved conclusively that Satan is a vicious liar and that Jehovah does have loyal servants, who keep their integrity even under the most severe tests! Do you want to please your reigning King? Keep praising Jehovah's name, helping others to know our God as he truly is. When you do, you are following in Jesus' steps. (1 Pet. 2:21) Like Jesus, you are making Jehovah rejoice and are proving His adversary, Satan, to be a debased liar! *w24.02* 11-12 ¶11-13

**Saturday, November 29**

*With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me? —Ps. 116:12.*

During the past five years, more than a million people have been baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses. When you dedicate yourself to Jehovah, you choose to become a disciple of Jesus Christ and make the doing of God's will the most important thing in your life. What will Christian dedication require of you? Jesus said: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself." (Matt. 16:24) The Greek phrase translated "let him disown himself" can also be rendered "he must say no to himself." As a dedicated servant of Jehovah, you will need to say no to anything that conflicts with his will. (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) That includes saying no to "the works of the flesh," such as sexual immorality. (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:18) Will such restrictions make your life difficult? Not if you love Jehovah and are convinced that his laws are for your own good.—Ps. 119:97; Isa. 48:17, 18. *w24.03* 2 ¶1; 3 ¶4

**Sunday, November 30**

*I have approved you.*
*—Luke 3:22.*

Jehovah gives his holy spirit to those whom he approves of. (Matt. 12:18) We can ask ourselves, 'Have I been able to display some aspect of the fruitage of God's spirit in my life?' Do you notice that you are more patient with others than you were before you came to know Jehovah? Actually, the more you learn to display the fruitage of God's spirit, the more evident it will be to you that you have Jehovah's approval! Jehovah applies the value of the ransom to those whom he approves of. (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6) But what if our heart resists the idea that Jehovah approves of us, even though we have faith in the ransom and are baptized? Remember, we cannot always trust our own feelings but we can trust Jehovah. He considers those who have faith in the ransom to be righteous in his eyes and promises to bless them.—Ps. 5:12; Rom. 3:26. *w24.03* 30 ¶15; 31 ¶17

**Monday, December 1**

*The dead are raised up.*
*—Luke 20:37.*

Does Jehovah have the power to resurrect the dead? Absolutely! He is "the Almighty." (Rev. 1:8) So he is powerful enough to defeat any enemy, even death. (1 Cor. 15:26) Another reason why we know that God is capable of resurrecting the dead is that he has a limitless memory. He calls each star by its name. (Isa. 40: 26) Also, he remembers those who have died. (Job 14:13; Luke 20:38) He can easily remember the smallest details about those he will resurrect, including their genetic code, their experiences in life, and their memories. Clearly, we can believe in Jehovah's promise of a future resurrection because we know that he has both the desire and the power to fulfill it. Consider another reason for believing in God's promise of a resurrection: Jehovah has already done it. In Bible times, he empowered a handful of faithful men, including Jesus, to raise the dead. *w23.04* 9-10 ¶7-9

**Tuesday, December 2**

*Let your words always be gracious, seasoned with salt.—Col. 4:6.*

If we express ourselves with tact and mildness, people may be more willing to listen and to continue the conversation. Of course, if someone wants to win a debate or to ridicule our beliefs, we are not obligated to answer him further. (Prov. 26:4) But such a person may be the exception; some—perhaps many—will listen. Clearly, there is great value in making mildness a personal goal. Pray to Jehovah for the strength you need to remain mild when responding to controversial questions or unjust criticism. Remember, your mild attitude can prevent differences of opinion from escalating into arguments. And your mild, respectful answer may actually move some listeners to change their view about us and about Bible truths. Be "always ready to make a defense" of your beliefs, "doing so with a mild temper and deep respect." (1 Pet. 3:15) Yes, let mildness be your strength! *w23.09* 19 ¶18-19

**Wednesday, December 3**

*Clothe yourselves with . . . patience.*
*—Col. 3:12.*

Consider four ways we can demonstrate patience. First, a patient person is slow to anger. He tries to stay calm and to hold back from retaliating when provoked or under stress. (Ex. 34:6) Second, a patient person can wait calmly. If something takes longer than expected, such a person tries to avoid becoming restless or irritable. (Matt. 18:26, 27) Third, a patient person is not rash. When a patient person has an important task to accomplish, he does not rush into it; nor does he rush through it. Rather, he sets aside a reasonable amount of time to plan what he will do. Then he gives the task the time that it requires. Fourth, a patient person strives to bear trials without complaining. He does his best to continue enduring while maintaining a positive attitude. (Col. 1:11) As Christians, we need to show all these facets of patience. *w23.08* 20-21 ¶3-6

**Thursday, December 4**

*Jehovah is the examiner of hearts.*
*—Prov. 17:3.*

A key reason to protect our figurative heart is that Jehovah examines our heart. This means that he looks past what we appear to be to others and sees who we really are on the inside. He will love us if we fill our mind with his life-giving wisdom. (John 4: 14) We will thereby leave no room for the moral and spiritual poison coming from Satan and his world. (1 John 5:18, 19) As we draw closer to Jehovah, our love and respect for him will grow. Because we do not want to hurt our Father, we will hate even the very thought of sinning. Marta, a sister in Croatia who was tempted to commit immorality, wrote: "I found it hard to think clearly and to suppress the urge to enjoy the temporary pleasure of sin. But fear of Jehovah protected me." How did fear of God do that? Marta said that she meditated on the consequences that a bad decision would bring. We can do the same. *w23.06* 20-21 ¶3-4

**Friday, December 5**

*"The nations will have to know that I am Jehovah," declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, "when I am sanctified among you before their eyes."*
*—Ezek. 36:23.*

Jesus knew that Jehovah's purpose is to sanctify His name, to clear it of all reproach. That is why our Master taught his followers to pray: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified." (Matt. 6:9) Jesus understood that this is the greatest issue facing all creation. No intelligent creature in the universe has ever done more to sanctify Jehovah's name than Jesus has. Yet, when Jesus was arrested, what sin did his enemies accuse him of? Blasphemy! Jesus surely felt that to abuse or to slander his Father's holy name was the most repugnant of sins. He was deeply disturbed that he would be charged and convicted of this crime. That may have been the main reason why Jesus was "in such agony" in the hours leading up to his arrest.—Luke 22:41-44. *w24.02* 11 ¶11

**Saturday, December 6**

*By wisdom a house is built up.*
*—Prov. 24:3.*

In our race for life, we must love Jehovah and Jesus more than we love our relatives. (Matt. 10:37) This does not mean, however, that we can neglect our family obligations, as though these were holding us back from pleasing God and Christ. On the contrary, to be acceptable to God and Christ, we need to fulfill our role in the family. (1 Tim. 5:4, 8) When we do, we will be happier. After all, Jehovah designed families to thrive when husband and wife treat each other with love and respect, when parents love and train their children, and when children obey their parents. (Eph. 5:33; 6:1, 4) Whatever your role is in the family, trust in the wisdom found in the Bible instead of relying on mere emotions, culture, or what so-called experts may say. Make good use of our Bible-based publications. These contain practical suggestions on how to apply Bible principles. *w23.08* 28 ¶6-7

**Sunday, December 7**

*Read it in an undertone day and night, in order to observe carefully all that is written in it; for then your way will be successful and then you will act wisely.—Josh. 1:8.*

A Christian woman needs to develop practical skills. Some skills that a girl learns in childhood will continue to benefit her throughout her life. For example, learn to read and write well. In some cultures, reading and writing are not considered to be important skills for women to learn. However, they are essential skills for every Christian. (1 Tim. 4:13) So do not allow any obstacle to stop you from learning to read and write well. How will you be rewarded? Such skills may help you to find and keep a job. You will become a better student and teacher of God's Word. Best of all, you will draw closer to Jehovah as you read his Word and meditate on it.—1 Tim. 4:15. *w23.12* 20 ¶10-11

**Monday, December 8**

*Jehovah knows how to rescue people of godly devotion out of trial.*
*—2 Pet. 2:9.*

Ask for Jehovah's help to resist temptation. As imperfect humans, we have a constant struggle against the temptation to do what is wrong. Satan is doing all he can to make that struggle as hard as possible. One way he tries to corrupt our thinking is by means of debased entertainment. Such entertainment can fill our mind with unclean thoughts—thoughts that defile our inner person and can lead to serious sin. (Mark 7:21-23; Jas. 1:14, 15) We need Jehovah's help if we are to overcome the temptation to do what is wrong. Jesus included the following petition in the model prayer: "Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one." (Matt. 6:13) Jehovah wants to come to our aid, but we must ask him for his help. We must also act in harmony with our prayers. *w23.05* 6-7 ¶15-17

**Tuesday, December 9**

*A threefold cord cannot quickly be torn apart.—Eccl. 4:12.*

When a couple value their friendship with their heavenly Father, they readily apply his advice, which in turn helps them to avoid and overcome problems that could cause their love for each other to cool off. Spiritual people also strive to imitate Jehovah and cultivate qualities that he displays, such as kindness, patience, and forgiveness. (Eph. 4:32–5:1) A couple who display such qualities make it easier for love to thrive. A sister named Lena, who has been married for more than 25 years, says, "It's easy to love and respect a spiritual person." Consider a Bible example. When Jehovah had to choose a couple to be the parents of the future Messiah, He chose Joseph and Mary out of the many descendants of David. Why? They both had a personal relationship with Jehovah, and Jehovah knew that they would build their marriage around their love for him. *w23.05* 21 ¶3-4

**Wednesday, December 10**

*Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you.—Heb. 13:17.*

Although our Leader, Jesus, is perfect, those whom he uses to take the lead here on earth are not. We may struggle to obey them, especially if they ask us to do something that we do not want to do. The apostle Peter once hesitated to obey. When instructed by an angel to eat animals that were unclean under the Mosaic Law, Peter refused—not once, but three times! (Acts 10:9-16) Why? The new direction did not make sense to him. On the other hand, the apostle Paul obeyed when the Christian older men in Jerusalem directed him to take four men to the temple and cleanse himself ceremonially to show that he was observing the Law. Paul knew that Christians were no longer under the Law. And he had not done anything wrong. Still, Paul "took the men the next day and cleansed himself ceremonially along with them." (Acts 21:23, 24, 26) Paul's obedience promoted unity.—Rom. 14:19, 21. *w23.10* 10 ¶15-16

**Thursday, December 11**

*Close friendship with Jehovah belongs to those who fear him.—Ps. 25:14.*

You probably would not think of fear as an important quality for a good friendship. However, those who want to have a close friendship with Jehovah must "fear him." No matter how long we have been serving Jehovah, all of us need to maintain a healthy fear of him. But what does it mean to fear God? A person who has a proper fear of God loves Him and does not want to do anything that would damage his relationship with Him. Jesus had such "godly fear." (Heb. 5:7) He did not feel a morbid dread of Jehovah. (Isa. 11:2, 3) Instead, he felt a deep love for him and wanted to obey him. (John 14:21, 31) Like Jesus, we feel deep respect and awe for Jehovah because He is loving, wise, just, and powerful. We also know that Jehovah loves us and is affected by how we respond to his guidance. We can either make Jehovah feel pain or make his heart rejoice.—Ps. 78:41; Prov. 27:11. *w23.06* 14 ¶1-2; 15 ¶5

**Friday, December 12**

*As soon as he was strong, his heart became haughty to his own ruin, and he acted unfaithfully against Jehovah. —2 Chron. 26:16.*

When King Uzziah became powerful, he forgot that Jehovah was the Source of his strength and prosperity. What is the lesson? We do well to remind ourselves that our blessings and privileges come from Jehovah. Rather than boast about our accomplishments, we should give Jehovah the credit for what we are able to do. (1 Cor. 4:7) We must humbly realize that we are imperfect and need discipline. A brother in his 60's wrote: "I have learned not to take myself too seriously. When I receive discipline for the childish mistakes that I sometimes make, I try to get back up and keep moving forward." The reality is that when we fear Jehovah and keep a humble view of ourselves, our life will turn out well.—Prov. 22:4. *w23.09* 10 ¶10-11

**Saturday, December 13**

*You need endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the fulfillment of the promise. —Heb. 10:36.*

The early Christians needed to endure. Besides dealing with problems common to all people, they faced additional trials. Many of them were persecuted, not only by Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities but also by their own families. (Matt. 10:21) And within the congregation, sometimes they had to fight the influence of the apostates and their divisive teachings. (Acts 20:29, 30) Yet, those Christians endured. (Rev. 2:3) How? They reflected on Scriptural examples of endurance, such as Job. (Jas. 5:10, 11) They prayed for strength. (Acts 4:29-31) And they focused on the good results of their endurance. (Acts 5:41) We too can endure if we regularly study examples of endurance in God's Word and in our publications and meditate on them. *w23.07* 3 ¶5-6

**Sunday, December 14**

*Keep on, then, seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you.—Matt. 6:33.*

Jehovah and Jesus will not give up on us. The apostle Peter was at a critical crossroads in his life after he denied Christ. Would he quit, or would he persevere as Christ's disciple? Jesus had supplicated Jehovah that Peter's faith would not give out. Jesus told Peter about that prayer and expressed confidence that Peter would later be able to strengthen his brothers. (Luke 22:31, 32) How it must have reassured Peter to think back on Jesus' words! When we come to a crossroads in our life, Jehovah may use caring shepherds to provide the assurance we need to remain faithful. (Eph. 4:8, 11) Just as Jehovah provided materially for Peter and the other apostles, He will care for our material needs when we put the ministry first in our life. *w23.09* 24-25 ¶14-15

**Monday, December 15**

*The one showing favor to the lowly is lending to Jehovah, and He will repay him for what he does.—Prov. 19:17.*

Jehovah notices even the smallest act of kindness that we extend to others. He views it as a valuable sacrifice and as a debt that he is going to repay. If you formerly served as a ministerial servant or an elder, Jehovah remembers the work you did in the past and the love that motivated you to do it. (1 Cor. 15:58) He also observes the love that you continue to show. Jehovah wants all of us to grow in love for him and for others. We can strengthen our love for Jehovah by reading his Word and meditating on it and by regularly talking to him in prayer. We can grow in our love for our brothers and sisters by assisting them in practical ways. As our love grows, we will draw ever closer to Jehovah and to our spiritual family. And we will enjoy those friendships forever! *w23.07* 10 ¶11; 11 ¶13; 13 ¶18

**Tuesday, December 16**

*Each one will carry his own load. —Gal. 6:5.*

Each Christian must decide how to care for his own health. Only a few specific Bible laws, such as the commands to abstain from blood and from spiritism, affect a Christian's choice of medical treatment. (Acts 15: 20; Gal. 5:19, 20) Other areas are matters of personal preference. No matter how strongly we feel about a form of treatment, we need to respect the right of our brothers and sisters to make their own health-care decisions. In this regard, we should keep the following points in mind: (1) Only God's Kingdom will bring complete and permanent healing. (Isa. 33:24) (2) Each Christian must be "fully convinced" of what is best for him. (Rom. 14:5) (3) We do not judge others or put a stumbling block before them. (Rom. 14:13) (4) Christians show love and do not put their freedom to make personal choices ahead of the unity of the congregation.—Rom. 14:15, 19, 20. *w23.07* 24 ¶15

**Wednesday, December 17**

*He is holy to Jehovah all the days of his Naziriteship.—Num. 6:8.*

Do you treasure your relationship with Jehovah? No doubt you do! Since ancient times, untold multitudes have felt the same way as you do. (Ps. 104:33, 34) Many have made sacrifices to worship Jehovah. That was certainly the case with those in ancient Israel known as Nazirites, or dedicated ones. This term aptly describes the zealous Israelites who made certain personal sacrifices to serve Jehovah in a special way. The Mosaic Law allowed for a man or a woman to make a special vow to Jehovah by choosing to live as a Nazirite for a period of time. (Num. 6: 1, 2) That vow, or solemn promise, involved following guidelines that the rest of the Israelites did not have to observe. Why, then, would an Israelite choose to take the Nazirite vow? Such an Israelite was likely motivated by deep love for Jehovah and sincere gratitude for His rich blessing.—Deut. 6:5; 16:17. *w24.02* 14 ¶1-2

**Thursday, December 18**

*Jehovah . . . shows loyal love to those who love him and keep his commandments.—Dan. 9:4.*

In the Bible, the Hebrew word for "loyalty," or "loyal love," conveys the idea of a warm and loving attachment that is often used to describe the love that God has for his servants. The same word is also used to describe the love shown among God's servants. (2 Sam. 9:6, 7) Our loyalty can become stronger over time. Consider how this proved true for Daniel. Daniel's loyalty to Jehovah was tested throughout his life. But one of the greatest tests came when he was in his 90's. Members of the royal court disliked Daniel and had little respect for the God he worshipped. So they devised a plot to have Daniel killed. They had a decree issued that would test whether Daniel would be loyal to his God or to the king. All Daniel had to do to prove his loyalty to the king was to stop praying to Jehovah for 30 days. Daniel refused to compromise. —Dan. 6:12-15, 20-22. *w23.08* 5 ¶10-12

**Friday, December 19**

*Continue loving one another. —1 John 4:7.*

Jehovah wants us to persevere in showing love to our brothers and sisters. If someone fails to show some Christian quality, we can assume that he wants to follow Bible principles and that he simply acted thoughtlessly. (Prov. 12:18) God loves his faithful servants despite their shortcomings. He does not cut us off when we make mistakes; nor does he stay resentful. (Ps. 103:9) How important it is for us to imitate our forgiving Father! (Eph. 4:32–5:1) Remember, too, that as the end draws near, we need to remain close to our brothers and sisters. We can expect persecution to intensify. We may even find ourselves in prison for our faith. If that happens, we will need our brothers and sisters more than ever.—Prov. 17:17. *w24.03* 15-16 ¶6-7

**Saturday, December 20**

*A man's footsteps are directed by Jehovah.—Prov. 20:24.*

The Scriptures contain accounts of youths who drew close to Jehovah, had his favor, and saw their life turn out well. David was one of them. At a young age, he chose God's side and later became a loyal king. (1 Ki. 3:6; 9:4, 5; 14:8) You can be encouraged and motivated by studying about David's life and faithful service. Or you can focus your study project on the example of Mark or of Timothy. You will see that they served Jehovah from a young age and gained a lasting record of God's approval. How your life turns out may be determined by how you use it right now. Your trusting in Jehovah and not in your own understanding will lead to His directing your steps. You can have a happy and rewarding life. Remember, Jehovah values what you do for him. What better way could you use your life than by serving our loving heavenly Father? *w23.09* 13 ¶18-19

**Sunday, December 21**

*Continue . . . forgiving one another freely.—Col. 3:13.*

The apostle Paul knew that his Christian brothers and sisters were imperfect. For example, he was misjudged soon after he started to associate with the congregation. (Acts 9:26) Later, some spoke about him behind his back to damage his reputation. (2 Cor. 10:10) Paul saw a responsible brother make a wrong decision that may have stumbled others. (Gal. 2:11, 12) And one of Paul's close companions, Mark, greatly disappointed him. (Acts 15:37, 38) Paul could have allowed any one of these situations to cause him to refuse to associate with the offenders. Yet, he maintained a positive view of his brothers and sisters and remained active in Jehovah's service. What helped Paul to persevere? Paul loved his brothers and sisters. Paul's love for others helped him to focus, not on their imperfections, but on their fine qualities. Love also helped Paul to do what is mentioned in today's text. *w24.03* 15 ¶4-5

**Monday, December 22**

*A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all.—2 Tim. 2:24.*

The Bible contains many accounts that highlight the value of mildness. Take the example of Isaac. When he settled in the Philistine territory of Gerar, his envious neighbors stopped up wells that his father's servants had dug. Instead of fighting for his rights, Isaac moved his household farther away and dug other wells. (Gen. 26:12-18) But the Philistines claimed that the water in this location was also theirs. Despite this, Isaac acted peacefully. (Gen. 26:19-25) What helped him to remain mild even when others seemed determined to provoke him? He surely observed the example of his parents, learning much from the peaceful ways of Abraham and "the quiet and mild spirit" of Sarah.—1 Pet. 3:4-6; Gen. 21:22-34. *w23.09* 15 ¶4

**Tuesday, December 23**

*I have purposed it, and I will also carry it out.—Isa. 46:11.*

Jehovah lovingly sent his firstborn Son to the earth to teach people about the Kingdom and to give his life to ransom us from sin and death. Then Jesus was resurrected back to heaven to rule as King of God's Kingdom. The main theme of the Bible is that Jehovah's name will be vindicated as he fulfills his purpose for the earth by means of his Kingdom under Christ. Jehovah's purpose cannot be changed. He has guaranteed that he will carry it out with success. (Isa. 46:10, ftn.; Heb. 6:17, 18) In time, the earth will be transformed into a paradise where perfect, righteous descendants of Adam and Eve will "enjoy life forever." (Ps. 22:26) More than that, Jehovah has an even broader purpose in mind. His ultimate purpose is to unite all his intelligent creatures in heaven and on earth. Then all those living will loyally submit to him as their Sovereign. (Eph. 1:8-11) Are you not amazed at the beautiful way that Jehovah accomplishes his purpose? *w23.10* 20 ¶7-8

**Wednesday, December 24**

*"Be strong, . . . for I am with you," declares Jehovah of armies. —Hag. 2:4.*

When the Jews who left Babylon arrived in Jerusalem, it was not long before they were affected by unstable economic and political conditions as well as opposition. Some therefore found it hard to focus on rebuilding Jehovah's temple. Thus, Jehovah commissioned two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to rekindle the people's zeal, which proved to be effective. (Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1) Nearly 50 years later, however, the Jews again reached a low point. Ezra, a skilled copyist of the Law, then came from Babylon to Jerusalem to encourage God's people to give priority to true worship. (Ezra 7:1, 6) Just as the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah helped God's people in the past to continue to trust in Jehovah during opposition, they can help us today to remain confident in Jehovah's support despite life's uncertainties.—Prov. 22:19. *w23.11* 14-15 ¶2-3

**Thursday, December 25**

*Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.—Col. 3:14.*

How do we express our love for fellow believers? One way we do so is by giving them comfort. We will be able to "keep comforting one another" if we are moved by compassion. (1 Thess. 4:18) How can we keep our love for one another strong? By doing our utmost to forgive the mistakes of others. Why is it especially important today to show our love for one another? Note the reason that Peter gives: "The end of all things has drawn close. Therefore, . . . have intense love for one another." (1 Pet. 4:7, 8) As the end of this wicked world draws ever closer, what can we expect? Speaking about his followers, Jesus foretold: "You will be hated by all the nations on account of my name." (Matt. 24:9) To withstand such hatred, we need to remain united. As we do that, Satan's efforts to divide us will fail, for we are held close together by love.—Phil. 2: 1, 2. *w23.11* 13 ¶18-19

**Friday, December 26**

*We are God's fellow workers. —1 Cor. 3:9.*

The truths of God's Word have enormous power. By teaching people about Jehovah and what he is truly like, we get to see something wonderful. The blindfold of satanic lies gradually comes off, and these individuals begin to see our beloved Father as we do. They are filled with awe at his limitless power. (Isa. 40:26) They are assured by his perfect justice. (Deut. 32:4) They are enlightened by his profound wisdom. (Isa. 55:9; Rom. 11: 33) And they are comforted to learn that he is the personification of love. (1 John 4:8) As they draw close to Jehovah, their hope of living forever as his children becomes sure. What a marvelous privilege we have to help people draw close to their Father! When we do so, Jehovah considers us his "fellow workers."—1 Cor. 3:5. *w24.02* 12 ¶15

**Saturday, December 27**

*Better for you not to vow than to vow and not pay.—Eccl. 5:5.*

If you are a Bible student or if you are being raised by parents who are Witnesses, are you thinking about getting baptized? That is a commendable goal! Before getting baptized, though, you will need to dedicate yourself to Jehovah. How do you dedicate yourself to Jehovah? You promise him in prayer that you will worship only him and that you will put his will first in your life. Really, you are promising Jehovah that you will continue to love him "with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength." (Mark 12:30) Your dedication is made in private, between you and Jehovah. In contrast, baptism is public; it shows onlookers that you have made a dedication. Your dedication is a sacred vow, and Jehovah expects you to live up to it, just as you expect that of yourself.—Eccl. 5:4. *w24.03* 2 ¶2; 3 ¶5

**Sunday, December 28**

*Each one of you must love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband.—Eph. 5:33.*

All marriages have difficulties. The Bible frankly acknowledges that married people will have "tribulation in their flesh." (1 Cor. 7:28) Why? Because marriage brings two imperfect people together, each with different characteristics, likes, and dislikes. Mates may come from different cultures or backgrounds. They may, in time, display traits that were not noticeable before the wedding. Any of those things can cause friction. Instead of recognizing that each has a part in the problem and therefore should work to resolve it, they may blame their mate. They may even come to see separation or divorce as the solution. But is giving up on the marriage the answer? No. Jehovah directs that married people respect the marriage arrangement even if their mate is difficult to live with. *w24.03* 16 ¶8; 17 ¶11

**Monday, December 29**

*The hope does not lead to disappointment.—Rom. 5:5.*

After your dedication and baptism, your hope of living forever on a paradise earth continued to grow as you learned more and matured spiritually. (Heb. 5:13–6:1) You have likely experienced what is mentioned at Romans 5:2-4. You had various tribulations, but you endured them and sensed God's approval. Confident of God's favor, you now have even greater reason to expect to receive the things he has promised. Your hope has become stronger than what you had initially. It is more real to you, more personal. It affects you more intensely, influencing every aspect of your life and changing how you treat your family, how you make decisions, and even how you use your time. The apostle Paul adds a very important point regarding the hope that you possess after receiving God's approval. He assures you that your hope will be fulfilled.—Rom. 15:13. *w23.12* 12-13 ¶16-19

**Tuesday, December 30**

[*Jehovah*] *is the stability of your times.—Isa. 33:6.*

When we go through a difficult trial, our feelings, thoughts, and reactions may not be as balanced as they normally are. We could feel as if we were being tossed from one strong emotion to the next. How does Jehovah help us when such emotions begin flooding over us? He assures us that he will stabilize us. When a ship encounters a storm, it may begin to rock dangerously from side to side. To counteract this movement, many ships have stabilizers that extend from each side of the ship under the water. These stabilizers can significantly reduce the rocking of the ship, making the situation safer and more bearable for passengers. However, many stabilization systems work best when the ship is moving forward. Similarly, Jehovah will stabilize us as we move forward faithfully in times of trial. *w24.01* 22 ¶7-8

**Wednesday, December 31**

*In God I put my trust; I am not afraid. —Ps. 56:4.*

When you feel afraid, ask yourself, 'What has Jehovah already done?' Reflect on what he has created. For example, when we "observe intently" how Jehovah cares for the birds and the flowers—which were not created in his image and are not capable of worshipping him—we will build up our trust that he will care for us too. (Matt. 6:25-32) Consider also what Jehovah has done for his worshippers. You might study a Bible character who showed outstanding faith, or you might read the experience of a modern-day servant of Jehovah. Additionally, meditate on how Jehovah has already cared for you. How did he draw you to the truth? (John 6:44) How has he answered your prayers? (1 John 5:14) How are you benefiting every day from the sacrifice of his beloved Son?—Eph. 1:7; Heb. 4:14-16. *w24.01* 4 ¶6; 7 ¶17